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Growth of Cook County

Vol. I

By
Charles B. Johnson

Published By
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF COOK COUNTY, ILL.




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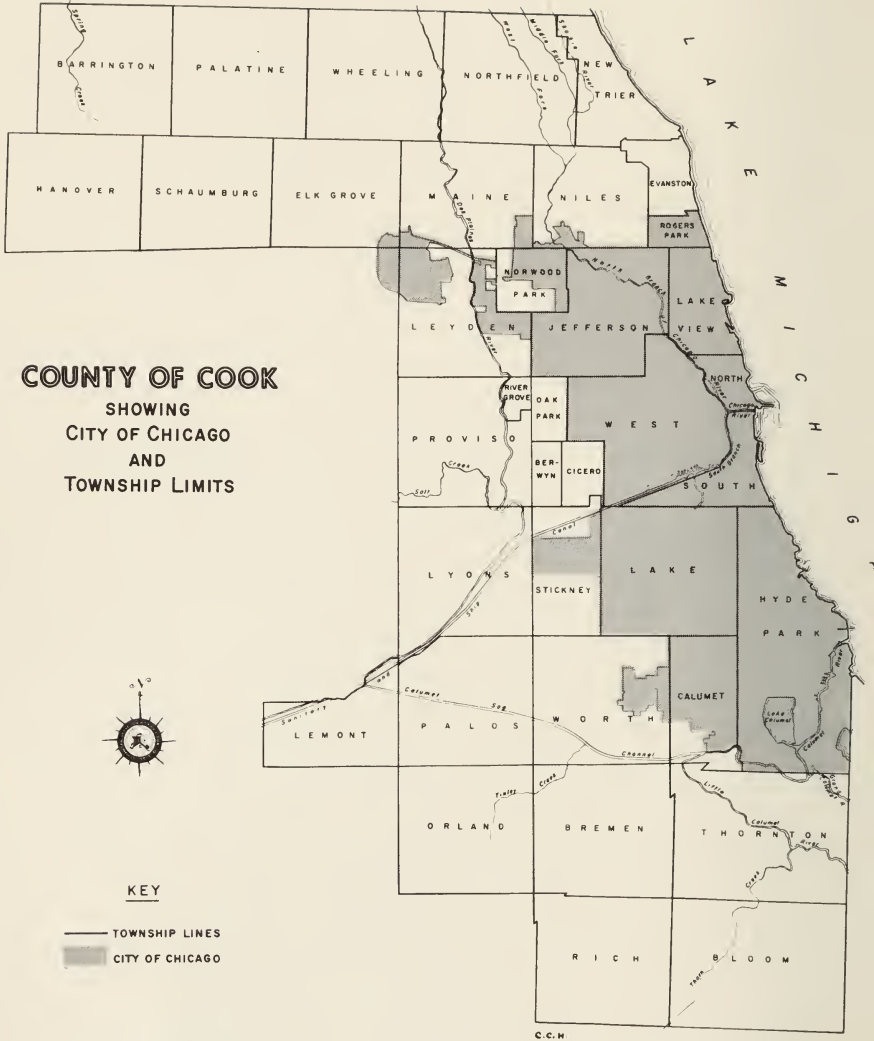
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Because the writing of this history is done during the spare time of the author, Volume II cannot be expected for some time.





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Growth of Cook County

Vol. I

By

Charles B. Johnson



A HISTORY OF THE LARGE LAKE-SHORE
COUNTY THAT INCLUDES CHICAGO

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Preface and Acknowledgments

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"History will record."

All of us have heard or read this trite statement many times. Yet it may or may not come true. Someone must do the recording, and if too much time elapses between recordings, many interesting and significant facts will be lost forever.

Spectacular happenings, such as wars, flights into space, great disasters, and revolutionary medical discoveries are certain to be recorded in detail, which is proper.

But lesser things that happen to us in our daily lives and in our local governing units often go unrecorded, or are recorded so piecemeal as to be practically worthless.

Are such things too trivial to bother with? Some are, and can be ignored. But on the other hand, life, for most of us, is made up of a series of little things, all of which are important to us. Upon the welfare of the individual depends the strength of a nation.

9 JLV 60 2010 P
Surely, then, the more significant points of history at local levels should be recorded in comprehensible form, giving us an insight to the factors that have had much to do with making

us what we are. Understanding this environmental background, we, as individuals, and as a community, should be more able to intelligently chart our futures.

Those to whom we are indebted for making possible this history are, first of all, our employers—the members of the Board of Commissioners of Cook County, Illinois. They have directed that we, as public relations director and historian for Cook county, devote our spare time to writing the county's history. These board members are:

DANIEL RYAN, *President*

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EDWARD M. SNEED

JOHN J. TOUHY

* (Elrod died July 22, 1959 and his place on the board had not been filled when this book went to press.)

There naturally are hundreds of others to whom we owe thanks for many helps, both large and small. Many of these kind people are mentioned in the text. Our apologies to those helpers we have failed to name.

If there is any one person to whom we owe thanks more than to another, however, it would be Betty Baughman, reference librarian for the Chicago Historical Society, of which Paul M. Angle is director.

Miss Baughman, sensing a researcher's slightest wonderment, will produce pertinent information from obscure recesses within her domain. She even will admit one to the almost sacred "well" where the researcher is permitted to handle century-old newspapers that are so fragile they sometimes fall apart at a mere touch.

Miss Baughman's helpfulness goes even beyond this, however. When the writer is discouraged and wonders why he ever agreed to start such a monumental project, she is ready with encouragement, saying:

"But this needs to be done. You just can't drop it. If there is anything we can do to help you, please tell us."

Joe Benson, Municipal Reference Librarian in the City Hall, has said virtually the same thing, and he, too, has spent much time in helping further the project.

To Joe's assistants, including Helen Berwanger, Dick Collins, Dick Wolfert, Celia Turnoy and Smart Strong, we also are deeply indebted. The same also holds true for Miss Margaret Scriven and Mrs. Elaine Sawyer, librarians; Mrs. Paul Rhymer, curator of prints; Grant Dean, library cataloger, and Walter Krutz, photographer, all of the Chicago Historical Society. We are grateful, also, to the staffs of the John Crerar and Chicago Public libraries.

Photographers, besides Krutz, who have lent valuable assistance include Elmer J. Majewski, head of the Cook county highway photographic department and his able assistant, George R. Bostick; Bob Murphy, Saverio Salerno and the late Harry Sawyer. Bill O'Malley, publicist for the Cook County Forest Preserve District has produced from his files some of the county pictures we have used.

To the Chicago daily newspapers—Tribune, News, American, and Sun-Times—we are deeply indebted for making available to us their vast news files.

A few of our many other helpers have been County Auditor Lee J. Howard and his top assistants, Ernest C. Marohn, Roland Erickson, Joseph Horkavy, Cornelius Buckley and the late John W. Koch; Albert J. Neely, director of the child welfare division of the county welfare department; William J. Mortimer, superintendent of the county's highway department, and his able assistants, Andrew V. Plummer, James F. Kelly, Hugo

Stark, John Skuba and John J. "Bud" McCleverty. Edwin A. Beck, head of the county highway map department, and Clarence "Cub" Higgins, map maker and artist, not only have designed and drawn the Chicago fire map reproduced in this volume, but have contributed in a score of other ways in helping with illustrations.

Assisting in re-typing, proof reading, and contributing valuable suggestions have been Maude McDonald, Mary Schlemm, Helen Gleason and Daphne "Dee" Benos.

Aiding in other ways have been John J. Altman, chief deputy county clerk; A. L. Hornick, William G. Donne, LaSalle DeMichaels, Mrs. Claire Page, Thomas J. McGovern of the assessor's office, John M. Szymanski, Dr. Ben L. Boynton, Dorothy A. Boland, county purchasing agent; Andy Petersen, assistant purchasing agent; Andrew G. Reynolds, county "store-keeper;" Attorneys Edward G. Bicek and Maurice H. Spira, Dr. Warren Johnson, assistant warden at County hospital; and State Representative Joseph L. Lelivelt of Cook county's fifth district.

Still others are Assistant Corporation Counsel Brendan Q. O'Brien of the City of Chicago; Assistant State's Attorneys Roman R. Stachnik and Martin G. Luken, Jr., John Crane of the county clerk's office, Adelaide Koch, Victoria Hurt, Eva Warren, Anne Keren, Robert Mathie, John Kane, Edwin Connelly, Charles McMullen, Charles Perlongo, William Brilliant, Bernard Anderson, Edward Eulenberg, John Drexler, John Callaway, Don Bresnahan, Lawrence Kiske, assistant vice president of the Chicago Title and Trust Company; Glenn Quasius, Dudley and Desolee Yeiser, Peter Blue, William Bromage, William H. Kling, Dr. A. John Brinkman, Ray Bingenheimer, and the late Claude A. Noble.

Encouragement also has come from our daughters, Elaine and Rosalie, and from our son, James Byron "Jimmy," who proudly have proclaimed to friends that their dad was writing

the history of Cook county, thereby compelling their father to finish a task once started.

Lastly, we are deeply indebted to the tolerances of our beloved wife, May, who has seen many a dinner grow cold while we stayed downtown to work on this history.

In compiling this history, we have enjoyed a free rein in both selection of materials and expression. That we have given our employers, the members of the county board, and particularly President Dan Ryan and Past Presidents William N. Erickson and Clayton F. Smith a favorable portrayal is because they are richly deserving.

As spare time, tenure of office, personal pride, and health avail, we shall do the second and final volume of this history. It should include such major subjects as highways and transportation, public welfare, juvenile home, jails, forest preserves, and, to a certain degree, schools. Also included should be biographical sketches of outstanding figures on the county board, both past and present, and a recount of some of the historic meetings of the board itself.

Charley Johnson

CHARLES B. JOHNSON

What Others Think

The author of *GROWTH OF COOK COUNTY*, Volume I, appreciates the following letters received from two outstanding citizens, each an authority in his own field. Each studied a copy of the manuscript.

The gentlemen are Paul M. Angle, director of the Chicago Historical Society, himself a renowned historian, and Joe Benson, Chicago Municipal Reference Librarian whose library in City Hall is flooded with requests for information on Cook county history.

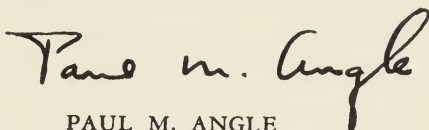
Dear Mr. Johnson:

I have just now completed the reading of your manuscript, "Growth of Cook County," Volume I.

I compliment you on an excellent job. I know better than most people, the need for a book which will supplement and bring up to date the existing historical record of Cook County, and it seems to me that within the limits you have set yourself in your first volume, you have met that requirement admirably. I like particularly your accounts of Cook County's courthouses, the Cook County Hospital, and the Oak Forest Hospital. I assure you that these institutional histories, when printed, will be consulted by readers long after you and I have gone to our respective rewards—or punishments.

I believe that this volume, and the one which I hope will follow it, have far more value than appears at first glance. The average Chicagoan tends to think of local government in terms of the city, and perhaps, the park district. He has no real comprehension of the governmental functions which the county performs. Any work which tends to bring these functions to his attention will serve an extremely useful purpose.

I note your generous acknowledgment of obligation to the Chicago Historical Society. It is most gratifying to know that the Society has been able to make an effective contribution to a work which will certainly endure for many years.



PAUL M. ANGLE

Chicago Historical Society

* * *

Dear Mr. Johnson:

Your first volume on Cook county indeed makes a welcome addition to the limited amount of county literature that has been available to us. It will be read with interest and pleasure by the general reader of local history and will be of very real value to teachers and librarians as a source for the study of Cook county. Most schools now include as a part of their curriculum a project intended to inform students of their local historical traditions. No school in the area now can afford to be without copies of your book.

The officials and residents of Cook county owe a considerable debt of gratitude to you for recording their history in so readable a volume. May I add that the staff of the Municipal Reference Library are particularly grateful that you have produced a book that will be so very helpful. We must admit that the benefit of assistance we were able to give you will be more than returned to us as we use your very excellent book.

Sincerely yours,



JOE BENSON

Municipal Reference Library

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GROWTH OF COOK COUNTY

CHAPTER 1

A STATE WITHIN A COUNTY

THIS is not a story to try to impress upon others the national and world importance of the county of Cook which has a population that all but staggers imagination.

(Cook county, which includes Chicago, had a 1950 census of 4,508,792. Some have estimated this may be increased nearly a million by 1960. The county's population is greater than that of all the rest of the state of Illinois combined; it is greater than that of any one of 40 states in the United States, and greater than that of any one of 32 nations among the members of the United Nations.)

This importance has been recognized since this county, on the south-west shore of Lake Michigan, started bursting at its seams a hundred years ago. Cook county forever is outgrowing its clothing and it expects never to stop.

Rather than dwell further upon this largeness, let us attempt to assemble in handy form the most significant highlights of Cook county's romantic and vigorous growth, starting with the time when the area was as yet undiscovered by civilized man and was inhabited only by tribes of wild Indians that

warred among themselves.

Here shall be included the notable achievements of the Cook county government, itself, the importance of which almost invariably is overlooked by writers who chronicle only the affairs of the city of Chicago.

Written more as a reference work than as a "best seller," we are not dramatizing the degraded doings of notorious criminals and other characters whose shadows, tho only temporary, cast palls over an ever-advancing, healthy community that is typically American.

Chicago and its 116 robust, incorporated suburbs which comprise a major portion of Cook county did not just happen to be where they are and what they are. There were overpowering, natural reasons for their location and growth. These we shall develop as we go along.

* * *

As we begin this account, the New World had just been discovered, with North America a treasure vault waiting to be unlocked. That civilized man could gain access to the great interior of the continent even before its outer areas could be fully explored was due to the presence of the mighty St. Lawrence river and the five Great Lakes that nurture this natural waterway.

Jacques Cartier had discovered the St. Lawrence for the French in 1535, but no further exploratory efforts had been made until early in the 1600s. Then came Samuel de Champlain who established a New France in Quebec.

As we enter the era of exploration that had a direct bearing upon the location of Chicago and Cook county we find that Champlain and his men already had pushed their explorations into the Great Lakes. They even had touched upon a few of the shores, but they did not know all of the shore lines and knew nothing first-hand of what surrounded and lay beyond these great inland seas.

The French wished to establish stronger claims and holds upon this vast interior country. Not only were they growing apprehensive of the awakening English, but they wanted further to tap the new country's rich resources of fur and potential minerals, and they harbored the undying hope that somewhere thru this vast domain of unchartered lakes and rivers could be found a "northwest passage" leading to the "China Sea."

The selfless Catholic missionaries, whose work was entwined with that of government, likewise wished to invade this wilderness to spread Christianity among the savages, even tho it often was to mean extreme hardships and, sometimes, martyrdom.

Also, the stout young ranger, Etienne Brule, had reported in about 1615 to his superior and teacher, Champlain, that the Indians of the Great Lakes knew of a water route to Florida.¹ This, then, was the shadow cast by forthcoming events—those that in time were to lead to the establishment of Chicago and Cook County.

* * *

Here we must touch briefly upon certain French exploits that had a direct bearing upon the "back door" discovery of the site of Chicago.

In 1634 Champlain, in Quebec, sent Jean Nicollet to find the "great sea to the west." Nicollet's perilous journey by canoe took him and his party across Lake Huron and thru the Straits of "Michilimackinac" (Mackinac) into Lake Michigan, thence down along the northwest shore of that lake to Green Bay where they made friends with the Winnebago Indians.

Nicollet was disappointed that these savages were not of the yellow race who might tell him something of the China Sea which he believed to be nearby. But he did explore their country, traveling up thru Lake Winnebago and on up the Fox river to its source near the present site of Portage, Wis-

1. The Great Lakes, Hatcher, Oxford Press, 1944, p. 93.

consin. At that point he was only a mile or so from the Ouisconsin (Wisconsin) river that drains southwesterly into the Mississippi.

Although the Indians at Portage told him of the nearness to a "great water," apparently meaning the Wisconsin and Mississippi waterway that leads to the gulf, Nicollet possibly misunderstood their meaning. At least, he did not bother to go farther to find out. Instead, he turned back and eventually reported that by traveling only "three more days" he could have reached the "Eastern Sea"—his term for the Pacific ocean.¹

Thus Nicollet barely missed discovering the upper Mississippi waterway that would lead, not to the China Sea, but down to the "Southern Sea" and to "Florida." Nicollet had succeeded, however, in pushing forward an historic route that other explorers soon were to follow.

The last figurative mile, the one with which Nicollet could not be bothered, was walked some 25 years later by Pierre Esprit Radisson (whose fingernails had been torn out by the torturing Mohawks of the East) and his brother-in-law, Medard Chouart.

In fur-buying partnership, this pair headed a party that had set out in quest of new territory and had followed the Nicollet route to Green Bay where they spent the winter and spring of 1658-59. In their travels about Wisconsin they went up the Fox river and over the divide into the waters of the Wisconsin and Mississippi. Thus they added a link to the exploratory chain that was to be so significantly lengthened 15 years later by Louis Joliet and Marquette.

* * *

Short Cut Called Chicago

Frontenac, governor of New France, commissioned Louis Joliet in 1673 to explore the "great river" that lay "in the

1. Ibid. (See last previous reference), p. 93.

west." The French by now had good reason to believe that this river might be the upper reaches of the Father of Waters, the mighty Mississippi, the lower portion of which had been discovered by the Spaniard, Hernando De Soto, in 1541.

If they could find an easy connection between the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence river system and the Mississippi river system they might find it advantageous to channel a big portion of their Great Lakes fur trade to France by the Mississippi route. (The building of the Erie canal a century and a half later was to by-pass the Niagara Falls bottleneck on the St. Lawrence.) At the same time the French reasoned that by so doing, they could strengthen their hold on the great interior of the new country.

Joliet's route led him past St. Ignace on the Straits of Mackinac where he was joined by Father Jacques Marquette, a Jesuit missionary who had been stationed there for two years.

So together, Joliet and Marquette, accompanied by a small retinue of helpers, departed St. Ignace on May 17, 1673 and in their canoes followed the trail previously laid out by Nicollet and extended by Radisson and Chouart. They crossed the north-west corner of Lake Michigan to Green Bay and then paddled up the Fox river to its source. On June 10 they portaged across the narrow divide at the latter place and entered the Wisconsin river.

A short float down the Wisconsin brought them to the "Great River" which they explored all the way down to a point shortly below the entrance of the Arkansas river. There they encountered Indian tribes who carried steel axes obtained in commerce with the Spaniards at the south end (mouth) of the Mississippi.¹

Joliet and Marquette thus drew the proper conclusion that the "Great River" did lead on down to the Gulf of Mexico,

1. Bancroft, History of the United States, Vol. 2, p. 332.

and since they were faced with the tremendous task of paddling back upstream against the strong current, they turned back. A major portion of their discovery still lay ahead, however, for on their return they learned from the Indians of a shorter route to Lake Michigan.

Pleased with this prospect, they heeded directions and entered the Illinois river, following that stream up past the Kankakee river and thence northeasterly in what is known as the Des Plaines river.

When in September they reached a small stream (Portage creek) that empties into the Des Plaines near the present villages of Summit and Lyons, they turned eastward into it and paddled upstream some 800 feet to its source, Mud lake.

By paddling some five and one-half miles thru swampy Mud lake, they came to its eastern end from whence they portaged their canoes and equipment about one and one-half miles over the water divide to the then west fork of the south branch of the Chicago river.

Another hour of paddling brought them down the length of the river and Joliet and Marquette found themselves back again in Lake Michigan.¹ They and their five boatmen thus became the first white men of accepted record to have crossed the portage, tho scattered historical notes indicate that other voyagers and fur traders may have preceded them.

Canal Possibility Foreseen

That Joliet fully realized the great significance of their discovery of this short cut is borne out by his recorded observation that a canal of "but half a league" (about one and one-half miles) thru a prairie would permit a "barque to go with facility to Florida."

Joliet and Marquette continued the fag-end of their journey

1. Data based, in part, upon information contained in a Chicago Historical Society book—The Location of the Chicago Portage Route of the Seventeenth Century, by Knight and Zeuch, 1928.

by way of Lake Michigan to Green Bay. Marquette decided to winter there at the Mission of St. Francis Xavier, previously founded by Father Allouez. Joliet proceeded on alone to Quebec and reported his momentous findings.

Marquette, however, still was not done with the Chicago area, his next goal being the conversion to Christianity of the Indians on the Illinois river. (When he and Joliet had come up that river they found a large settlement of Indians near what later became known as Starved Rock, and Marquette promised then to return and found a mission among them.)

Due to ill health, Marquette was unable to leave Green Bay until Oct. 25, 1674. Then, accompanied by two companions, Pierre Porteret and Jacques, he returned to the Chicago area by way of Lake Michigan, arriving in December. In his notes Marquette referred to the Chicago river as "Portage river," and on Dec. 14 wrote: "Being cabined near the portage, two leagues up the river, we resolved to winter there, on my inability to go further, being too much embarrassed and my malady not permitting me to stand much fatigue."

Thus we learned that a building apparently stood near the present site of West 26th and South Leavitt streets, close to the small west fork (now filled in) of the south branch of the Chicago river. If this cabin was built by French fur traders, it may have been the first Chicago building constructed by white man. (Notes of early missionaries state that some of the early Indians of the area lived in cabins which they, themselves, built.)

The Marquette cabin was owned by two French fur traders, Pierre Moreau and his unnamed partner who was a "surgeon." The pair at the time was staying and trading with the Indians near Starved Rock on the Illinois river, nearly 100 miles away, but hearing of Marquette's arrival at their Chicago portage house, the one who was the "surgeon" visited Marquette and his companions, taking them provisions for the winter and



Top—Photograph of bronze plaque on Michigan avenue bridge, Chicago, placed in 1925 by Illinois Society of the Colonial Dames of America. Depicted are canoes bearing first white men of accepted record to pass thru Chicago river. Time was September, 1673. Standing is explorer Louis Joliet; seated (center) is Father Jacques Marquette.

Courtesy Chicago Historical Society.

Lower—Joliet and Marquette, discoverers of the site, wouldn't know the place today (1959). It's Chicago's skyline.



Was this the first Chicago building constructed by civilized man? Artist T. A. O'Shaughnessy here has recreated in oil his conception of cabin occupied by ailing Father Jacques Marquette during winter of 1674-75. Altho Indians were known to have built log cabins in those times, probability exists that this cabin was constructed by French fur traders. Site was present West 26th and South Leavitt streets, close to small west fork (now filled in) of south branch of Chicago river. *Courtesy Chicago Historical Society.*

admonishing the neighboring Indians that Marquette "owned" the cabin.

The following spring (1675) Marquette accompanied the fur traders to their post on the Illinois river and began preaching to the Illinois Indians with whom he readily made friends. Because of recurring illness, however Marquette had to cut short his mission work after a few weeks and started back for Mackinac, dying enroute. He was 38 years old.

In referring to the discovery of the Chicago river shortcut and the visualization of a canal, Historian Alvord in 1920 wrote:

"This plan of communication between the two great water systems by way of the Chicago river has been a vision seen by many statesmen from Joliet's¹ day down to the present time; but to Joliet belongs the honor of first proposing it, and to him also must be ascribed the glory of first visualizing the future greatness of the country of the Illinois."²

What Joliet saw and what he visioned eventually were to become Chicago, second largest city on the continent, and Cook county, the most populous county of the most powerful nation in the world.

* * *

Following close upon the heels of Joliet and Marquette came the fabulous Sieur de la Salle, possibly the greatest of all French explorers.

La Salle's heroic work in exploring and attempting to colonize and hold the great Mississippi Valley for France was so stupendous that this outline of the growth of Chicago and Cook county cannot go fully into all of its details, interesting and important as they are. A sketch, however, is needed to show that La Salle's exploits had a bearing upon the develop-

1. Alvord's spelling.

2. The Illinois Country, Alvord, Vol. 1, p. 65 of the Centennial History of Illinois, 1920.

ment of the area that later was to become Chicago and Cook county.

Having obtained from Louis XIV, king of France, an "order of knighthood, land grant, and permission to explore, colonize and take possession of the Mississippi Valley in the name of the King of France,"¹ LaSalle, in 1678-79, constructed a sailing boat, the Griffon, above Niagara Falls. This vessel was meant to be used in carrying supplies to La Salle on the Great Lakes, and in transporting furs for France on its return trip to the falls.

In the late summer of 1679 La Salle sailed in this vessel up the Great Lakes to Green Bay on Lake Michigan where he ordered the boat loaded with furs for its return. Meanwhile, La Salle and 14 followers paddled in canoes down along the west shore of Lake Michigan, past the Chicago river, which La Salle termed a "channel" of the lake, and on to the mouth of the St. Joseph river in what now is Lower Michigan where, within weeks, they built Fort Miami.

There La Salle anxiously awaited the arrival of his faithful lieutenant, Henri de Tonty, whom he had left behind at Mackinac while coming into Lake Michigan on the Griffon. Tonty's orders had been to come down to the mouth of the St. Joseph as soon as the Griffon had passed the straits on its return voyage.

When Tonty and his 20 men finally arrived at Fort Miami on Nov. 12 (1679), after having come by canoe down the east shore of Lake Michigan, they reported that the Griffon had not arrived from Green Bay, apparently having been wrecked by storm. (Because no trace ever was found of the fur-laden vessel, it is safe to presume that it had sunk.)

La Salle added to his retinue the Tonty party and paddled up the St. Joseph river to a point that now is South Bend, Indiana. There they portaged their canoes some seven miles southwest over the water divide to the Kankakee river, floated down

1. From *The Location of the Chicago Portage Route*, Knight and Zeuch, 1928.

the Kankakee to its confluence with the Des Plaines river, and there entered the Illinois river.

From that point they floated down the Illinois, past what is now Starved Rock, to the site of present Peoria where, on the bluffs, they constructed Fort Crevecoeur.

Leaving Tonty in command of the new fort, La Salle, on Mar. 1, 1680, started a return trip to Fort Frontenac (now Kingston, Ontario) to secure supplies which the ill-fated Griffon had been designed to bring.

As he was going up the Illinois river on this return, La Salle noted again the strategic position of the commanding bluff at Starved Rock and decided he should have built his fort there instead of at Peoria.

This would be the place from which he better could make his bid for the retention of the Great Lakes to Gulf waterway, for the subjugation of those among the Indians who were hostile, and for the eventual colonization of the new continent's fabulously wealthy interior.

But for all this dream of empire that was racing within his blood, La Salle had working against him the forces of inadequate help from his own France, the hostility of the mighty Iroquois Indians, the might of the English, and his own human errors.

When he arrived at Fort Miami, La Salle sent word back to Tonty to abandon Fort Crevecoeur and build a new fort at Starved Rock, naming it Fort St. Louis. This Tonty did while La Salle was away.

The activities of La Salle for the next seven years—up to the time of his murder at the hands of a mutinous follower—must be condensed. But during this period La Salle made trips to Fort Frontenac and even to France, there to regain command which he had lost temporarily, and to obtain approval for his dream of establishing a fort and colony at the mouth of the Mississippi.

Tonty's valiant work and ability to carry out directives mark him as one of the heroes of American history, tho he has been woefully overlooked. He organized about him at Fort St. Louis the friendly Illinois Indians and attempted to hold off the powerful Iroquois whose frequent attacks were urged on by the English.

Massacre of a portion of his men and many of the friendly Indians gathered about his fort, as well as destruction of the fort, was to follow, but Tonty escaped with a bare handful of followers and remained in the Great Lakes area to assist La Salle later in exploring the Mississippi and in rebuilding and holding Fort St. Louis.

La Salle familiarized himself during this time with the portage route over the water divide between the Chicago and Des Plaines rivers, and in 1682 wrote about the subject, discussing the advisability of cutting a canal across the divide, as previously suggested by Joliet.

Joliet, it will be recalled, had envisioned a short canal carrying only enough water to float canoes or other light craft, but La Salle declared this would not do for the size ships needed in carrying furs down to the mouth of the Mississippi for reshipment to France. (Apparently La Salle could not visualize such huge projects as the Illinois and Michigan canal, or the Sanitary and Ship canal, which were to become practical realities one and one-half and two centuries later.) In any event, La Salle was not optimistic about the canal idea, possibly because he had not been the first to think of it.

La Salle decided to explore the Mississippi all the way to its mouth, so using Fort Miami as a base, sent Tonty on ahead for the first part of the trip.

Tonty and a small group began their journey on Dec. 21, 1681, skirting the southern end of Lake Michigan to the Chicago river and portaging their canoes over to the Des Plaines. La Salle, who had finished supervising the storage of supplies

at the fort, followed on foot a week later, overtook Tonty on Jan. 6, and together, with some 50 French and Indian followers, dragged their equipment on sleds over the now frozen streams until they reached open water at Peoria.

On April 9, 1682, they reached the mouth of the Mississippi, thereby becoming the first white men of record to travel the full length of the Mississippi waterway. There they took possession of the entire Mississippi valley in the name of the King of France.

La Salle no doubt saw even then that if France could establish a fort and colony at the river's mouth, it would aid materially in holding the new empire and in keeping open this great interior trade route. Here, tho, he was to make the greatest error of his life—he took improper compass readings, the disastrous effect of which we soon shall see.

La Salle and Tonty returned north the following winter, rebuilt Fort St. Louis, and gathered about them some 20,000 Illinois Indians, including braves and their families. Their promise to the friendly Illinois tribe was that the French would help hold off the hostile Iroquois, furnish them a market for their furs, and bring them supplies of cloth, hunting knives, and axes.

Late in 1683 a new French governor, De la Barre, who had replaced Frontenac, relieved La Salle of his authority and replaced him with another commander. But La Salle, not to be denied, went back to France, appealed to Louis XIV, and not only succeeded in ousting his political enemies, but gained permission to establish the colony at the mouth of the Mississippi.

In 1684, with four ships and 175 colonists, La Salle sailed from France on what was to be his last great venture. After entering Gulf waters his ships encountered heavy storms, there was quarreling aboard that may or may not have had anything to do with their sense of direction, and above all, there was the matter of the error in the reckoning of longitude that La

Salle, himself, had made when he had been at the great river's mouth two years earlier. At any rate, they could not find the Mississippi.

Realizing they were lost, La Salle landed his colonists on the shores of east Texas, 400 miles west of the Mississippi. There they founded their ill-fated colony and for two years La Salle wandered in vain search of the river's mouth.

Tonty, meanwhile having heard of La Salle's successes with the King, floated down the Mississippi in 1686, fully expecting to find his commander with a prospering colony at the river's mouth. One can imagine his disappointment at finding no trace of La Salle. Tonty had to turn back.

With his Texas colony floundering and nearing extinction because of hunger, disease, and internal strife, La Salle in desperation took the remaining followers, whose numbers now had dwindled to a mere 17, and on Jan. 12, 1687 started walking north to Canada!

On Mar. 20 at Trinity river in Texas mutiny broke out within the little band and one of them murdered La Salle. The murderer was avenged, but the other mutineers, refusing to go further, stayed behind with the Indians while the piteous handful of loyal followers, numbering seven, struggled on northward, led by La Salle's own brother, the Abbe Cavelier. The ragged band straggled into Fort St. Louis (Starved Rock) on Sept. 14, 1687 with their dreadful story.

Tonty struggled on bravely but futilely in trying to hold Fort St. Louis for the French, but in 1702 the French were compelled by the Iroquois to give it up. Thereafter, for nearly 100 years, the portage called Chicago was to be held by tribes of warring Indians. This period was like a century out of the dark ages.

This does not mean, however, that there were no civilized men in the area. Fur traders, whose presence was subject to the whims of the Indians, came and went during this period, and one of them, Jean Baptiste Point DeSable, a Negro with

possibly some French blood, was to become, toward the latter part of the eighteenth century, Chicago's first civilized settler of record, as is described later in more detail.

* * *

The British gradually acquired control of the fur trade of the Northwest territory during the earlier part of the eighteenth century, but title to the lands east of the Mississippi was given to the American Colonies by the Treaty of Paris in 1783 which officially terminated the Revolutionary War.

The British, however, still were reluctant to give up their fur trade in this territory and even after the war encouraged the Indians of the region north of the Ohio river to resist all attempts at American colonization. Thus it was that the young United States had to conduct a series of wars with the Indians to make the new country safe for settlers.

One of the phases of the Indian wars that bore directly upon the history of Chicago came at the conclusion of the Battle of Fallen Timbers in which General Anthony Wayne on Aug. 20, 1794 decisively defeated the Indians on the Maumee River near Toledo.

Chicago Land Grant

In the Treaty of Greenville which followed on Aug. 10, 1795, the Indians relinquished claim to the territory of eastern Ohio and to three small parcels of strategically located land, one of which was "six miles square at the mouth of Chicago river emptying into the south end of Lake Michigan where a fort formerly stood."

Another was a piece of similar size at Peoria, and the third, 12 miles square at the mouth of the Illinois river where it empties into the Mississippi. The United States also was granted "free passages of the portages and rivers connecting these grants."

The treaty reference to the "mouth of Chicago river . . . where a fort formerly stood" has caused some confusion in

history, but there is evidence that the French had a small fort here prior to 1700—more than a century before the first Fort Dearborn.

We go back in history here for the explanation. In the spring of 1684 Tonty, learning the Iroquois were gathering to attack him at Fort St. Louis, sent to Mackinac for assistance. Durantaye, who commanded the fort there, came with 60 men to Tonty's relief, Father Allouez accompanying them.

Tonty repulsed the attack before Durantaye arrived, but Durantaye apparently built a fort at Chicago during 1684, as indicated by a passage in Tonty's memoirs. Having returned to Mackinac in 1685 to obtain news of La Salle, and hearing that La Salle supposedly was at the mouth of the Mississippi, Tonty resolved to go in search. Later he wrote:

"I embarked, therefore, for the Illinois, on St. Andrew's Day (30th of October, 1685); but being stopped by ice, I was obliged to leave my canoe, and to proceed on by land. After going 120 leagues, I arrived at the fort of Chicagou, where M. de la Durantaye commanded; and from thence I came to Fort St. Louis, where I arrived the middle of January (1686)."

How long the French maintained this fort at Chicago is not clear, but in all probability it was for only a few years, and garrisoned only a portion of that time. There also was an Indian village and a Catholic mission here at the time. St. Cosme, a missionary, wrote that when he visited Chicago in 1699 he found a tribe of Miami Indians dwelling in "over 150 cabins." The Miami were affiliated with the Illinois Indians, and were friendly to the French.

CHAPTER 2

DE SABLE WAS HERE

LITTLE historical evidence remains concerning the person generally accepted as being the first civilized settler on the site that later was to become Chicago.

Excluding from consideration an undetermined number of French fur traders who came and went across the Chicago portage during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, some of whom for short periods even resided in the Chicago area with their Indian wives and families, Chicago's first permanent resident could reasonably be regarded as Jean Baptiste Point DeSable.

Unfortunately no recorded evidence has been found that shows beyond any shadow of doubt the origin of DeSable, or how he got to Chicago. There is evidence, however, that he either was Negro or mulatto, possibly with some French blood in his veins, and there is strong tradition that he came from Santo Domingo in the West Indies. Moreover, the name, DeSable, tho variously spelled, is found throughout Santo Domingo history.

According to this tradition, DeSable, the free Negro, sailed

from San Domingo to establish fur trade at New Orleans, then made his way up the Mississippi and the Illinois rivers, stopping for a while at Peoria before coming on to the shores of Lake Michigan.

Another angle relative to the origin of DeSable stems from research done by Historian Quaife.¹ In this Quaife found that the name DeSable (again spelled variously) crops up repeatedly in families of French origin that were living in Canada one and two generations before DeSable's time. He advanced the theory that DeSable could have been an illegitimate son of a French-Canadian of good family and a Negro slave woman, there being a few slaves in Canada at that time. From such a geographical background DeSable, the trader, could have come into the territory at the head of Lake Michigan.

It is possible that DeSable operated a trading post near the present site of Michigan City (Ind.) at the same time or even before coming to Chicago, for he was there in 1779 when the British, still fighting the Revolutionary war, arrested him on suspicion of helping the American colonies.

DeSable was imprisoned at Fort Mackinac, but in a short time made friends with his captors and was placed in charge of a hitherto mismanaged British trading establishment, The Pinery, near Port Huron, Mich., where he remained for three or four years.²

Whether the year was 1779 or 1782 or 1783 that DeSable built a combination house and trading post at the mouth of the Chicago river is difficult to ascertain. In any event, he lived there with his family until 1800, getting along well with all Indian tribes.

It is an established fact that he took a young Indian woman as a common-law wife, that they raised a respected family, and that years later the couple had themselves married by a priest.

1. Quaife, Checagou, chapter 3.

2. Ibid, chapter 3.

His establishment was on the north bank at a point where the river turned southward a few hundred feet to enter Lake Michigan. It overlooked both the river and the lake.

With this understanding of the geographical location of DeSable's place, one should not ignore the possibility that the "Point DeSable" portion of the name was merely the address of Jean Baptiste. In French "point de sable" means point of sand, and that was exactly where the settler's house was located.

(Several years later a portion of this point of sand, jutting out between the lake and the river, was dredged out by the army to permit large boats to enter the river's mouth, thereby giving the settlement a satisfactory harbor.)

Concerning DeSable, August Grignon of Butte des Morts, Wis., in writing his "Recollections," published by the Wisconsin Historical Society, said:

"At a very early period there was a negro lived there (Chicago) named Baptiste Point DeSaible. My brother, Perish Grignon, visited Chicago about 1794, and told me that Point DeSaible was a large man; that he had a commission for some office, but for what particular office or from what government, I cannot now recollect. He was a trader, pretty wealthy, and drank freely. I know not what became of him."

DeSable sold his trading post in May of 1800 to Jean Lalime, a French fur trader, and went to Peoria, then to St. Charles, Mo., where he died at the home of a daughter in 1818. His wife is believed to have died while they were living in Peoria.

An interesting aftermath of this sale of property by DeSable to Lalime was recounted by Wm. H. Stuart in the Sept. 4, 1954 issue of his *Heard and Seen* news letter. Stuart wrote:

"Alexander F. Beaubien, great-grandson of Mark Beaubien, Chicago pioneer, came down Green Bay road from Waukegan to make a notable contribution to history. He recorded (Aug.

26, 1954) with Joseph F. Ropa, Cook county recorder, what is believed to be the first transfer of real estate in Chicago history.

"The document records the sale in 1800 by Jean Baptiste Point Sable to Jean Lalime of a frame house, smaller buildings, furnishings, livestock and farm implements on the north bank of the Chicago river opposite (what was to become) the site of Fort Dearborn. John Kinzie, who later acquired the property, was a witness to the transaction. The original document was recorded in Detroit in the seat of the territory that included Chicago.

"This historic deed became the 16 millionth document filed in the Cook county recorder's office since the present numbering system was started in 1874. It was in French which Recorder Ropa, for supplementing the record, had translated by the Berlitz School of Languages.

"Making the historic filing the more impressive was the presence, as special guest, of Paul Angle, director of the Chicago Historical Society, who received for his files a photostatic copy of the document. Virgil Berg, in charge of plats in the recorder's office, did considerable research in helping to locate the deed in Detroit."

One could hope by this recorded bill of sale to see the actual handwriting of DeSable, but the names of Point Sable, Jean Lalime, J. Kinzie, and Wm. Burnet (the latter two witnesses) all appear to be in the same handwriting as that in which the bill of sale, itself, is written, and which is signed by Joseph Yoyez, a justice of the peace of Detroit's Wayne county.

That DeSable could even write his name is problematical, tho one would suspect that a trader of his day would have some degree of literacy. It also is possible that the spelling of the name, Point Sable, might be the guesswork of the writer of the document.

It was a fitting tribute to Chicago's first settler that in 1935

one of the city's fine high schools, DuSable, should be named in his honor. (Here again, the ones who chose the name also had to settle upon a spelling, and no one can say, with certainty, that the form chosen was either correct or incorrect, nor does it make any difference.)

The Kinzies Arrive

Lalime enlarged the DeSable house and occupied it as his home and trading post until 1804 when John Kinzie, who had been living near Niles, Mich., bought the property and, with his wife and infant son (John H.) moved to Chicago, becoming the first white family of record to reside here.

Kinzie, with a flair for organization and business, enlarged the trading post and set about establishing a trade empire of his own. He built branch posts at Milwaukee and on four rivers of the hinterland—the Rock, Illinois, Kaskaskia, and Sangamon, all of which were routes connecting indirectly with the Chicago portage.

Tho Kinzie apparently operated as an independent trader at first (he also was a silversmith), there is evidence¹ that he established a working agreement with the great American Fur Company, of which John Jacob Astor was founder, obtaining from that concern such items as knives, guns and ammunition, blankets, cloth, tobacco, trinkets and whiskey used in barter with the Indians for their furs. And the furs, in turn, apparently were sold to the Astor company and shipped eastward via the Great Lakes, land portages, and Canadian rivers. The Erie canal, which was to shorten the route, was not to come until later (1825).

Kinzie also became sub-agent for the Indian agency established in Chicago in 1804 and re-established in 1816, and was an Indian interpreter. He died in 1828.

It is of some interest to note here that tho Chicago was in

1. Illinois Centennial Publications, Introductory Vol., p. 27.

Illinois territory, its Indian affairs were under the direction of the governor of Michigan territory, whose headquarters were at Detroit; this because Chicago was more easily accessible by way of the Great Lakes than from the headquarters of the Illinois territory at Kaskaskia on the Mississippi. The same was true for the Indian agency at Green Bay.

* * *

Up to this point in this outline of the why, where, and how of Chicago and Cook county the significant events have followed, more or less, in chronological order, with little overlapping in time element. But from now on, with the advent of settlers, expanding trade, and the establishment of government, separate phases of the history often are occurring at the same time. There will be some backtracking to pick up necessary threads for different parts of the story.

* * *

Fort Dearborn Established

The young United States government realized the need for a fort at Chicago. Protection was necessary for the strategic portage. Savage Indians were a menace to the settlement, and the trade-covetous British in Canada were reluctant to accept the spirit of the treaty terms following the Revolution. Accordingly, President Thomas Jefferson, immediately after the purchase of the Louisiana territory in 1803, ordered the fort's construction on the land ceded by the Treaty of Greenville as previously mentioned.

United States Army Capt. John Whistler, who had been stationed at Detroit, began the construction of the new fort that year and completed it in 1804, naming it in honor of Gen. Henry Dearborn, then Secretary of War.

The fort, consisting of two block houses surrounded by a palisade, was built on the south bank of the Chicago river near its mouth. (The site sometimes is referred to as the "west" bank because the river then flowed southward a few hundred

feet before entering the lake at the foot of what now is Madison street.)

A few yards southwest of the fort was the U. S. Agency house, built the same year. The Kinzie house, it will be remembered, was across the river, on the north bank.

Fur trade flourished even better than before, but the presence of the fort hastened the inevitable trouble with the Indians. The fort attracted about its perimeter a small number of settlers who looked to it for protection.

The Indians, stirred up by their British allies who were losing their fur trade to the Americans, resented the toe-hold the settlers thus were gaining and in April of 1812 organized raiding parties which set upon the outlying whites, driving the settlers inside the palisade for protection.

These Indians, mostly Pottawatomies, had enlisted help from neighboring tribes in Wisconsin and Indiana to repulse the settlers and garrison.

On June 12, 1812 the United States declared war on the British and on July 14 surrendered Fort Mackinac to the enemy, thus leaving Fort Dearborn cut off from help. On August 9 Capt. Nathan Heald, then commanding Fort Dearborn, received orders to abandon the fort immediately and proceed to Fort Wayne by land.

Capt. Heald's force consisted of 68 men. Also present were some dozen women and 20 children. Instead of leaving immediately, however, Capt. Heald waited six full days by which time some 500 hostile Indians were encamped about the fort.

The Indians admittedly were present to chase away the whites, but sent word into the garrison that an orderly withdrawal would be permitted if the garrison would leave behind its stores, principally ammunition and barrels of whisky.

This posed an even greater problem for Capt. Heald. He and his men felt, with considerable justification, that if unlimited quantities of fire-water and ammunition fell into the

hands of the Indians the savages might go berserk, change their minds, and set upon the small band of whites as it was making its getaway on foot thru hostile wilds.

In the meantime, Capt. William Wells, Indian agent at Fort Wayne, came to Chicago with 30 friendly Miami Indians to help with the evacuation.

On the night of Aug. 13 Capt. Heald took the step that, as we know now, may have been wrong. He had his men destroy all the ammunition that was to be left behind and pour all the whisky into the lake. The Indians knew of the whisky-dumping and their leaders informed Capt. Heald that the younger warriors were incensed beyond control.

At 9 a.m., August 15, 1812, the garrison marched out and the Indians entered the fort to confirm their suspicion that the ammunition also had been destroyed. The 500 enraged savages sullenly followed as the procession of men, women and children made its way southward from the fort along the Indian trail that paralleled Lake Michigan.

The Day Of The Massacre

When about one and one-half miles south, a large portion of the Indians circled to the right and took ambush positions behind a low range of sand hills about 100 yards back from the lake. Some were ahead of the procession of whites, others were alongside, and some still stalked behind.

Realizing that battle was but minutes away, some of the soldiers, who were on horses, charged to the top of the ridge and fired the first volley. With that the entire procession was swarmed upon by the savages. Greatly outnumbered, and from inadequate fighting positions, the whites resisted bravely, even in hand-to-hand struggles, but were overwhelmed.

Men, women and children, alike, were slaughtered and scalped. Capt. Heald surrendered what was left of his pitiful handful, following which the Indians killed without mercy the prostrate wounded.



Site of Chicago about 1820 as visualized in 1857 by unidentified painter. Looking westward from Lake Michigan, picture shows winding Chicago river, together with its north branch, south branch, and west fork of south branch. Rebuilt Fort Dearborn appears in center, with John Kinzie house and trading post at right. Broken lines, superimposed, indicate new river channel after straightening by army engineers.

Courtesy Chicago Historical Society.



Model of first Fort Dearborn (1803-1812) from drawing in 1808 by Capt. John Whistler, executed by A. L. Van Den Bergen, sculptor, in 1898.
Courtesy Chicago Historical Society

Out of the band of 100 whites who had left the fort but an hour earlier, only 30 men, ten^rwomen, and eight children survived. The casualties were 38 men, two women, and 12 children. The Indians lost about 15 warriors.

The 30 Miami tribesmen, who were supposed to aid the whites, had fled into the woods when the fighting began, but not Capt. Wells.

The brave Capt. Wells, fighting desperately, was surrounded and stabbed in the back. His head then was cut off and his heart taken out and eaten by the savages who believed that by so doing part of his courage would be conveyed to them.

The following day the fort and Indian agency house were burned and the prisoners scattered among the tribes. Capt. Heald subsequently was turned over to the British at Fort Mackinac and eventually paroled.

John Kinzie, who had accompanied the soldiers and participated in the fighting, was among the prisoners, but because he had been fair in his dealings, the Indians soon released him. Kinzie had spared his family the massacre ordeal by hiding them beforehand with friendly Indians who later took them by canoe to St. Joseph (Mich.).

In 1816, following the Treaty of Ghent which closed the War of 1812, the government rebuilt Fort Dearborn on the same site as the original and rebuilt the nearby Indian agency. John Kinzie returned with his family to reoccupy his deserted home and trading post, only now he was to become an agent for John Jacob Astor's American Fur Company. As mentioned previously, he died on Jan. 6, 1828.

Also in 1816 the Ottawa and Chippewa Indians ceded to the United States the lands ten miles north and ten miles south of the mouth of the Chicago river, and back to the Kankakee, Illinois, and Fox rivers. The purpose of this grant was to secure right-of-way for the building of a canal and military road, described later on.



Women and children leaving fort in covered wagon shortly before massacre. Picture from the movie, "Fort Dearborn Massacre," made in Chicago by Selig Photoplay company in 1912.

Courtesy Chicago Historical Society



John Kinzie bids farewell to his family which is being taken to safety by friendly Indians shortly before massacre. Picture from 1912 movie "Fort Dearborn Massacre."

Courtesy Chicago Historical Society



Unknown artist's conception of Fort Dearborn battle near lake front.
Courtesy Chicago Historical Society

In 1830 the federal government opened for settlement these ceded public lands and settlers began arriving, both from overland and by boat from Detroit, Buffalo, and other Great Lakes ports. Many settlers never stopped when they reached the Chicago area, using the portage merely as a gateway to the fertile prairies lying to the west. The capture of Black Hawk and his handful of warriors in the skirmishes of northwestern Illinois in 1832 wiped out the last Indian resistance in northern Illinois, making settlement safe.

With the need for the second Fort Dearborn at an end, it was closed officially on Dec. 29, 1836. In the meantime Cook county had been born and a city started. The great fur-trading era was over.

Up to this point the background of the Cook county story has featured the explorations, discovery of site, early fur trade, battles of empires for possession, and savage Indian warfare. All of this was the outgrowth of white man's first entry to the region thru the Great Lakes waterway lying to the north and east.

Government Moves Northward

It remained, however, for civil government to advance from the opposite direction, from the southern and southwestern edges of the state, areas which had attracted pioneering settlers from Kentucky, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and other points east, as well as a number from Tennessee and southeastern states.

This second half of the Cook county background likewise involves struggles of empires and Indian uprisings, but more than that it is the story of daring settlers who, having advanced into the wilds ahead of law and order, were trying to evolve for themselves workable forms of government that would protect their lives and property and secure for them the rights of free men.

While the colonies of young America were fighting for their independence from the British, the general assembly of Virginia



The second Fort Dearborn, built in 1816, as seen from north. Rope ferry is shown in right foreground. Painting, possession of Chicago Historical Society, is by unidentified artist.

extended that colony's territorial claims in the west by first creating the "county of Kentucky," now western Kentucky.

Realizing, then, that this new Kentucky county needed protection from both the Indians and British, the Virginia assembly, at the urging of Virginia Governor Patrick Henry, on Jan. 2, 1778, authorized the sending of an expedition to seize the British strongholds along the Mississippi, including Fort Kaskaskia at the mouth of the Kaskaskia river.

Young George Rogers Clark was appointed a lieutenant colonel of the Virginia militia and, with a small band of 175 men, sent west to battle the British.

With characteristic daring Clark slipped up on and captured Fort Kaskaskia on July 5, 1778; then, with an exhibition of courage that only a Washington could rival in crossing the Delaware, Clark led his diminishing handful of impoverished men across the then undrained flatlands of Illinois to Vincennes on the Wabash river where, on Feb. 25, 1779, he captured that British stronghold.

In the meantime, the Virginia legislature, having heard of Clark's initial success on the Mississippi, on Dec. 9, 1778 created the "County of Illinois." This unsurveyed territory stretched from the Ohio river on the southeast and the Mississippi on the southwest to the Illinois river on the northwest. The vague eastern boundary was up the Wabash toward Detroit.

With the northern boundary of the "county" undefined and left open, it may be said without fear of much, if any, contradiction that present-day Cook county, with its all-important portage route, probably was included.

That they were inhabitants of Virginia and that Patrick Henry was their governor would have meant nothing, even had they known of it, to the savage Indians who then inhabited the area around "the portage called Chicago."

A large proportion of the residents in the Mississippi river

villages were French who had come to the new territory prior to the time Britain wrested control from the French. (In 1763, at the close of the French and Indian War, France had ceded her North American possessions east of the Mississippi to Great Britain.)

The French in these villages at first welcomed Clark and, later, John Todd, "county lieutenant" who had arrived in 1779 to establish government; but in time this warm feeling cooled, partly because Clark's small army, having exhausted its funds and credit, was compelled to seize without payment what was needed in food and other supplies from the now poverty-stricken villagers and small farmers. The French complained bitterly to Virginia, but to no avail.

That the Virginia colony could not send aid to Clark in the way of men, supplies, and money was because she was draining the last of her available resources in combatting the British along the seaboard.

As the war wore on, Clark reached out here and there to quell Indian uprisings, but with diminishing forces, he lived in constant dread that the repulsed British would come back upon him. The enemy, however, was concentrating its fighting strength on the eastern battlefields.

Adding also to the worries of Clark and Todd was the fact that the local governments they had established in the villages, particularly in Kaskaskia, had fallen into disrepute and had become chaotic.

Clark undoubtedly was greatly relieved when he learned that on Nov. 30, 1782 a provisional treaty of peace was signed by Great Britain and the colonies. On Jan. 18, 1783 the Illinois regiment was disbanded and in the following July Clark was relieved of his command.

In the final settlement of the war (Sept. 3, 1783) Britain gave the entire territory east of the Mississippi and as far north as the Great Lakes to the United States. The brave Clark,

with all of his troubles, had been chiefly responsible in securing these lands for the new nation.

On March 1, 1784 Virginia turned over to the new nation this large territory which had become such a headache during the six turbulent years it had been under her jurisdiction. (Virginia's proclamation of Illinois as a county actually had expired in 1782, but she retained authority two more years.)

It was not until July 13, 1787 that the new nation, recovering from its war wounds, passed the ordinance calling for the establishment of government in the Northwest Territory which included, of course, Illinois. And it even was three years after that before Arthur St. Clair, governor of the territory northwest of the Ohio river, arrived in Kaskaskia (Mar. 5, 1790).

On April 27, 1790 Gov. St. Clair established the county of St. Clair and made Kaskaskia its seat. Two days later he named judges for his new courts.

In the six intervening years between 1784 and the arrival of St. Clair the settlements along the Mississippi, Ohio, and Wabash rivers had to rule themselves as best they could, which at times amounted to practically no government at all. Their government sometimes has been likened to that of city states.

* * *

Preliminary to the passage of the Ordinance of 1787 the new congress appointed James Monroe of Virginia, who later was to become the fifth president of the United States (1817-1825), to assist in formulating policies for the new country. Monroe thereupon made a reconnaissance tour of a portion of the area in 1785 and wrote:

"A great part of the territory is miserably poor, especially that near Lakes Michigan & Erie & that upon the Mississippi & the Illinois consists of extensive plains wh. (Monroe abbreviated the word 'which') have not had from appearance & will not have a single bush on them, for ages. The districts, therefore, within wh. these fall will perhaps never contain a suffi-

cient number of inhabitants to entitle them to membership in the confederacy.”¹

Familiar only with the wooded hills of the East, Monroe, who later was to achieve greatness for his “hands-off” doctrine to European nations, could not realize that the black prairies upon which he gazed were the world’s most fertile lands, needing only to be planted to corn and wheat to become the nation’s “bread-basket.” Nor could he know that livestock, which would consume much of this grain, would be transported only a short distance to the world’s greatest stockyards in the nation’s second largest city for processing into meat that would feed much of the nation.

And without even a hint of the vision of a Joliet or a La Salle, Monroe could not sense that the “miserably poor” territory near Lake Michigan would become, in the not-too-distant future, the site of a huge inland seaport, the site of the Prudential sky-scraper, the Board of Trade building, the Merchandise Mart, Soldier Field, belching steel mills, the world’s largest hospital (Cook county), the river that would be made to flow backwards, the world’s largest rail center, largest airport, a web of super-highways over which automobiles, buses, and trucks would flow smoothly, and the site of a county in which over five million prosperous people would live and work.

* * *

Prior to the time Cook county was created by an act of the Illinois legislature on Jan. 15, 1831 its territory had been under the imposing number of 31 different jurisdictions since the discovery of America.

Among those laying claims to it at one time or another were France, England, the American colonies of Virginia and Connecticut, the Northwest Territory, the Indiana Territory, the Illinois Territory, the state of Illinois, and various counties

1. Writings of James Monroe, Hamilton, Vol. 1, p. 117.

within the state. Civil government within the area, however, either was non-existent or negligible until the time of Cook county's creation.

The political subdivisions into which the county was thrown between 1784, when Virginia relinquished the county of Illinois to the new union, and 1831, when Cook county came into being, are worthy of some note beyond mere mention.

When Arthur St. Clair, first governor of the Northwest Territory, created St. Clair county early in 1790, he included in it not only most of Illinois, but also much of Wisconsin and Minnesota, all of Indiana and Michigan, and a portion of Ohio. He made Kaskaskia its seat.

St. Clair was told, however, by higher authorities in Philadelphia (then capital of the U. S.) that he had overdone the size of the county he had named after himself, so shortly thereafter (April 27, 1790) he trimmed down the county, throwing most of it, including Cook county, into Knox county which was to be organized the following June 20 and for which Vincennes on the Wabash river was to be made the seat. (This Knox county, which embraced about half of Illinois, all of Indiana, part of Ohio, most of Michigan and Wisconsin, and a portion of Minnesota, is not to be confused with the present Illinois county of the same name.)

The able historian, Pierce, says¹ that Cook county became a part of Wayne county of the Northwest Territory when the latter county was created on Aug. 15, 1796, remaining thus for the next five years, tho this is not shown in the recent Illinois publication—Counties of Illinois, Their Origin and Evolution.

On May 7, 1800 Congress carved from the Northwest Territory the Indiana Territory, which included Illinois, and proclaimed Vincennes the territorial seat.

1. Pierce, *A History of Chicago*, p. 409.

On Feb. 9, 1801 Gov. William Henry Harrison of the Indiana Territory enlarged St. Clair county, dumping back into it most of Illinois (including Cook county), all of Wisconsin, large portions of Michigan and Minnesota, and a bit of northwestern Indiana.

On Jan. 24, 1803, according to Pierce, the boundaries of Wayne county were enlarged to gain back the site of Cook county. (It is evident that these early counties of the Indiana Territory were not competing with each other for possession of the area that eventually was to become Cook county. Rather, the opposite appears to be true; nobody cared into whose jurisdiction this far-off, Indian-infested, wilderness country was to fall.)

So it was that in 1805, when most of Wayne county became the territory of Michigan, few cared that the site of Cook county again passed back into St. Clair county of the Indiana Territory.

Then on Feb. 3, 1809 the Illinois Territory was created and on Apr. 28 Nathaniel Pope, Secretary and Acting Governor of the new territory issued a proclamation continuing within it the two counties then organized—St. Clair (including Cook) and Randolph.

We now enter in earnest upon the series of "begats" by which counties, singly and in groups, were split off from larger, parent counties until the last division was made in 1859.

Out of the present 102 counties in Illinois, Cook and La Salle, both created on Jan. 15, 1831, became the fifty-fourth and fifty-fifth in the state.

Confining ourselves to Cook county, we find that it was a part of and descended from each of the following counties, beginning with St. Clair when that original county was in the Illinois Territory:

County	Territory or State	Years
St. Clair	Illinois Territory	1809-1812
Madison	Illinois Territory	1812-1814
Edwards	Illinois Territory	1814-1816
Crawford	Illinois Territory	1816-1818
(Cook thus was a part of Crawford, one of the 15 organized counties when Illinois was admitted to the union on Dec. 3, 1818.)		
Clark	State of Illinois	1819-1821
Pike	State of Illinois	1821-1823
Fulton	State of Illinois	1823-1825
Putnam ¹	State of Illinois	1825-1831

Nor was Cook county to be the end of the line. When created on Jan. 15, 1831 it contained 2,464² square miles, as against its present 956.³ It touched upon both Wisconsin and Indiana and included all of Lake and DuPage counties, two-thirds of Will, and smaller portions of McHenry and Kane counties.⁴

In 1836 Cook had taken from it portions that became parts of Will, Kane, and McHenry counties. (Lake county was in this part of McHenry county that was split off from Cook. In 1839 Lake county was created out of the eastern portion of McHenry county.) DuPage was carved from Cook county in 1839, following which no changes were to be made in Cook county's boundaries except minor ones caused by lake fills.

Early historical writers sometimes stated that Cook county once was a part of Peoria county. Technically they were in error, tho there was a logical reason for such statements.

The explanation⁵ is that at the same time Putnam county (containing the site of Cook county) was peeled from the

1. Attached to Peoria county as explained later on.

2. Determined by James Rivera, formerly of Map Division, Cook County Highway Dept.

3. Increased from time to time by lake fills.

4. Carpentier, *Counties of Illinois*, p. 50.

5. Pierce, *A History of Chicago*, p. 411.

territory governed by Fulton county (Jan. 13, 1825), Peoria county likewise was created from a portion of the Fulton territory and the new Putnam county was placed under the temporary jurisdiction of Peoria county officials where it was to remain until the establishment of Cook county six years later.

This accounts for the action of the Peoria county commissioners in creating in December of 1825 an election precinct in Chicago. One of these elections, together with one of the early Chicago tax assessments made by the Peoria assessor, we describe later on.

CHAPTER 3

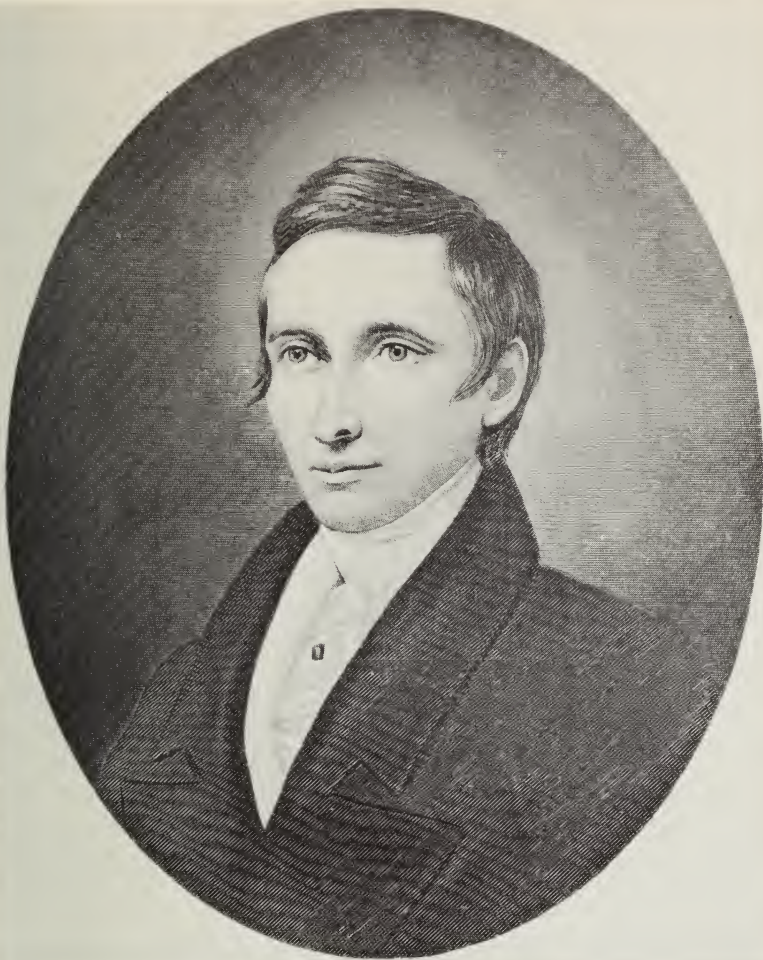
HOW COOK COUNTY GOT ITS NAME

COOK COUNTY is named after Daniel Pope Cook, one of the earliest, youngest, and most brilliant statesmen in Illinois history.

The spectacular achievements accomplished by this young pioneer lawyer, newspaper publisher, territorial auditor and clerk, United States courier, circuit judge, attorney general, United States congressman, and diplomat are worthy of recount here.

Tho widely acclaimed in his day for his astute leadership, Cook has been something of a forgotten man in the annals of his state's history, possibly because the overshadowing figure of Abraham Lincoln soon was to appear upon the scene. It is lamentable, therefore, that there is a scarcity of source materials dealing with Cook's life.

Cook was born in Scott county, north central Kentucky, in 1794. Tho he was related to the influential Pope family of Kentucky, young Daniel's parents were too poor to send him to college after he had finished with the grades. The youngster was ambitious, however, so began studying law while working in the office of a lawyer relative.



DANIEL POPE COOK
After Whom Cook County, Illinois, Was Named.
Born 1794, Died 1827

From boyhood thru manhood Cook not only was small and frail of stature, but his health—he was a consumptive—was poor most of the time. Thus beset with continuing ill health, it is a testimonial to his fortitude that he always could muster a winning smile, a cheerful word, and draw from deep wells within him sufficient strength to bring fulfillment to his dreams. Like Another he had but 33 years in which to accomplish his life's work.

Upon reaching 21 young Daniel set out to seek his fortune in new country further west. Three hundred miles away lay St. Genevieve, a town on the banks of the Mississippi river in the Missouri territory, just across the river from Kaskaskia, seat of the new Illinois territory. There, at St. Genevieve, Daniel found work in a store, but quit after a short time and moved across to Kaskaskia, then a western metropolis of some 700 residents.

When he entered Kaskaskia in the Illinois territory in 1815, young Cook is believed to have worked again in a store, but for only a few weeks because the bartering of salt and calico for "Dominecker" chickens, hand-churned butter, and fresh 'possum pelts did not fit in with his ambitions.

Cook resumed the reading of law, this time under his uncle, Nathaniel Pope, a lawyer, and in the same year began practicing law in the counties surrounding Kaskaskia.

In January of 1816, when but 22, young Cook was appointed auditor of public accounts for the Illinois territory by the territorial governor, Ninian Edwards, which position he was to hold for some 15 months. In the meantime, however, the young barrister took additional steps to advance both himself and the welfare of his adopted territory.

In 1816 he and a friend purchased *The Illinois Herald*, only newspaper then published in the territory, and renamed it *The Western Intelligencer*. Cook became its editor.

A year later, at the age of 23, young Cook reached the con-

clusion that he was not rising rapidly enough in the world. Maybe by going to Washington, D. C., he reasoned, President-elect James Monroe or somebody in the capital would appoint him to some important job, such as secretary of the Alabama territory. Moreover, his lawyer-uncle, Nathaniel Pope, already in Washington as the territory's delegate to the House of Representatives, might be able to lend him assistance.

It was in February of 1817 that young Daniel arrived in Washington. Failing to obtain a high post, he settled for a lesser governmental job, that of dispatch bearer, but still he felt that even greater success lay just around the corner. On April 5 he sent back to Kaskaskia his resignation as territorial auditor.

Within weeks Cook, always a dapper dresser and of polished manners, was sent to London with state papers which he delivered to John Quincy Adams, then United States representative to Britain. These papers asked Adams to return home and become secretary of state in the cabinet of President Monroe.

Together, the outstanding statesman, Adams, and the youthful messenger, Cook, returned on a slow boat to Washington. During the long trip they became well acquainted, which acquaintanceship eventually had much to do with making Adams president, and had a direct bearing upon the political setback that befell Cook a year before his early death.

The duties of a government messenger, Cook learned, could not always be so romantic and important as his trip abroad. When his tasks became more menial, young Daniel thought he was in a rut. He was learning the hard way that important governmental posts were not easy for mere youths to obtain. His health was not good, and he grew homesick—homesick for the sight of familiar faces, including that of Julia Catherine Edwards, comely daughter of the territorial governor. Cook quit his job.

Cook Urged Statehood

On November 18—the year still was 1817—Daniel arrived back in Kaskaskia. His hopes soared anew and two days later, even before he had had time to say hello to everybody, he printed in his little newspaper an editorial advocating statehood for the Illinois territory.

Statehood, at that time, was something to which neither the territorial residents nor their political leaders had given serious thought. The territory was too young, still in the process of organization, and its population too small.

Cook's first article appeared on Nov. 20. Cook knew that in less than two weeks the territorial legislature was to convene in regular session right there in Kaskaskia. He followed up in his next issue with an even more urgent appeal. This dwelt upon the full rights of man that could come only under statehood; and he advocated vigorously that Illinois should come into the union as a slave-free state, even tho several slaves already had been brought into the territory.

Moreover, there still was enough boy in him at 23 to make him think it would be fun to beat the neighboring Missouri territory into the union. Missouri, torn by dissension over the slavery issue, already had taken preliminary steps seeking statehood, but was following the slow, prescribed methods for admission.

Under existing federal rules a territory could not seek statehood until its population, as established by census, reached at least 60,000. Young Cook, however, must have received a tip from his uncle in Congress that under certain circumstances the territory might slip in with as few as 35,000 residents. Tho no census had been taken, Daniel glibly published that the Illinois territory had 40,000 residents.

When the territorial legislature convened in Kaskaskia on Dec. 2 (1817), Daniel was very much on hand, not only as a reporter for his own newspaper, but also, thanks to an appoint-

ment by Governor Edwards, as clerk of the house of representatives. He was in good position to favor his pet project for immediate statehood.

Almost at once one of the territorial legislators introduced a resolution memorializing Congress to grant Illinois statehood. Because much of the wording of the resolution was similar to that in Cook's newspaper articles, it is reasonable to presume that Cook, himself, drafted most of it.

Politics in the territory had not yet crystalized into serious factions. Governor Edwards favored the resolution, and the legislators, by now afire with enthusiasm, paid little attention to the resolution's anti-slavery provision, tho a short time later this was to become a highly contentious issue.

On Dec. 10, twenty-two days after young Daniel reached town with his idea for statehood, the legislators unanimously adopted the resolution. The memorial was handed Congress on Jan. 16 (1818) by Delegate Pope, shortly thereafter it cleared committees, and on April 6 it was passed by the house and on April 14 by the senate. President Monroe signed it on April 18.

The Illinois Constitutional Convention, held in Kaskaskia on Aug. 28, adopted a state constitution and selected Kaskaskia as the first state capital; on Oct. 6 Shadrach Bond was inaugurated as the first state governor; and on Dec. 3 (1818) President Monroe signed the act of admission by which Illinois became the 21st state of the union. Thus Cook's territory won the race for statehood over Missouri by two years, eight months, and seven days. (Missouri was admitted Aug. 10, 1821.)

During this year of 1818 when the territory was preparing itself for statehood, young Cook kept himself as busy as ever. Not only did he edit his paper and supervise official government printing in the paper's job shop, but practiced law with such success that early the same year he was appointed judge of the western circuit courts.

Tho he was to hold the judgeship only a few months, he quickly won for himself an enviable reputation for his fairness. Traveling on horseback from one to another of the new counties surrounding Kaskaskia, he held court in private homes or in any other building that could accommodate small gatherings.

One record remains that on May 11, 1818, when in Union county, Judge Cook convened a grand jury in a log cabin, presided as evidence was presented, then had the jury retire to the adjoining woods for its deliberations. The jurors, composed of backwoods farmers and hunters, sat on the trunk of a fallen tree as they pondered over the evidence and made their findings.

Tho his court cases were of all types, the pioneer society of Cook's time was such that a typical case involved the settlement of a dispute between two hunters over the ownership of the meat of a wild hog that one had shot and the other captured.

In the elections that fall, with statehood virtually assured, the youthful Judge Cook sought to become the new state's first representative in Congress for the remainder of the term that would follow statehood. He was defeated by 14 votes, however, by another ambitious young barrister, John McLean of Shawneetown, who was to become his strongest political opponent thruout the rest of his abbreviated life.

Never long out of public office, Judge Cook was chosen by the state legislature in December of 1818 (some evidence indicates it was the following March) as the first attorney general of the new state of Illinois.

Becomes Our Congressman

This Cook held until the following August (1819) when he came back to defeat McLean for congressman by a majority of 633. The count was 2,192 for Cook to 1,559 for McLean. Thus Cook, at 25, became the second congressman to represent the young state, and he was re-elected in 1820, 1822, and 1824.

During the campaign in which he first defeated McLean, there appeared in Cook's own newspaper, *The Western Intelligencer*, the words of a song, *Cook and Liberty*, the first stanza of which read:

To choose a good congressman, now is the time,
Good counsel I'll give, 'tho' I give it in rhyme,
I swear by my conscience (and would on the Book),
I think our best choice will be Daniel P. Cook.

This bit of whimsy may not have been written by Cook himself, for his writings and speeches bore a more scholarly touch.

Cook was a registered Democrat of Randolph county.¹ By 1826, however, he was running on the Whig ticket. His successful campaigns against McLean centered largely around the question of slavery. Tho Cook had led the state into the union slave free, there was constant agitation to amend the new state constitution to permit slavery. McLean was the leading spokesman for the pro-slavery element.

In their campaigns these young and able orators often engaged in public debates on the slavery subject. Theirs was a prelude to the great Lincoln-Douglas debates that were to follow in 1858.

In an analogy one could say that it was Cook, then a Democrat, who brought Illinois into the union a slave-free state and kept it that way, and that it was Lincoln, the Republican, who later went ahead to free the nation. The work of each man complemented that of the other.

Tho Cook's rise to power was aided at the outset by his uncle, Nathaniel Pope, and by his prospective father-in-law, Ninian Edwards, his noteworthy accomplishments were largely of his own making. He stood on his own abilities, and in the light of history, rose above all other Illinois figures of his

1. Hubbs, *Idols of Egypt*, p. 177.

generation.

While in Congress Cook worked prodigiously for the welfare of his young state. For one thing, he recognized the need of a canal that would connect the Great Lakes, at Chicago, with the navigable waters of the Illinois river, even as Joliet had envisioned a century and a half earlier. Such a waterway, he reasoned, not only would assist in the development of northern Illinois, but would benefit the entire middle-west and the nation.

When Cook first sought federal aid for the project, Congress was luke-warm and offered only token help, and even at home Cook found some opposition. In fact, one state senator from southern Illinois argued before the state legislature that the canal should not be constructed because it would be an inlet for hordes of "blue-bellied Yankees."¹

In the end, however, Cook scored a victory that, judged even by Twentieth century standards of federal aids, was tremendous. On March 2, 1827, with Cook on his way out as a "lame duck" member, Congress granted Illinois 285,629 acres of land in alternate sections, checker-board style, along the ten-mile-wide route of the proposed Illinois-Michigan canal. Proceeds from the sale of this land eventually were to cover the major costs of the completed waterway.

It is significant to note that at the time of the grant which was to mean so much to the eventual welfare of Chicago and Cook county, Congressman Cook was chairman of the ways and means committee of the House of Representatives. His holding of this powerful position indicates the esteem in which he was held in Washington.

That Cook was defeated for re-election to Congress in the fall of 1826 was due, in part, to his aforementioned personal friendship with John Quincy Adams, the able secretary of

1. Brown, Hon. Daniel P. Cook, Chi. Hist. Soc., p. 14.

state who had helped draft the Monroe doctrine.

It was early in 1825, following the previous fall's elections, that Adams, Henry Clay, William Crawford, and Andrew Jackson, presidential aspirants, found themselves deadlocked, no one having a majority of the electoral votes.

Under the rules of government, this threw the matter into the House of Representatives for a decision. There Adams won the support of the Clay and Crawford factions, and, with the help of Cook, his personal friend, Adams was chosen over Jackson by a single vote.

Jackson's followers in Illinois, who were in goodly number, cried that Cook had "betrayed his trust." The strength of this opposition at home undoubtedly was underestimated by Cook, for in the elections of 1826, being in ill health and not having the formidable McLean to run against, he campaigned but little.

The result, surprising to both sides, was that his opponent, Joseph Duncan of Jackson county, a comparative unknown, won by 641 votes. A remark common after the election was: "We did not intend to beat little Cook, but to so lessen his majority that he would feel his dependence upon us."¹

Tho stung by his surprise defeat, Cook sought to make his closing months as a "lame duck" congressman outstanding. In this he again was successful, but as chairman of the ways and means committee, he put in long hours of work that further undermined his now rapidly-failing health.

When the legislative session came to an end that spring of 1827, Cook accepted a government diplomatic mission to Cuba. He expressed hope that the Caribbean clime would restore his health, but this it failed to do. In June he returned to his home which then was Edwardsville, north of Kaskaskia.

That fall he expressed a desire to visit once again his birth place in Scott county, Kentucky, and it was there that he died

1. Brown, *ibid*, p. 27.

on Oct. 16, 1827, and was buried. He was 33 years old.

On May 6, 1821, during his second term in Congress, young Cook married the Edwards girl. Her father, Ninian Edwards, at that time United States senator for Illinois, later became governor. (It was only poetic justice that Congressman Cook, in partial repayment for the early favors bestowed upon him by his father-in-law, at one time secured for Ninian Edwards the appointment as ambassador to Mexico.)

Following the death of her illustrious young husband, Julia Catherine Cook moved with their only child, John (born June 12, 1825), to Belleville, Illinois, where she died three years later. The son was to become in time and in turn, mayor of Springfield in 1855, a brigadier general in the Civil War—here fighting in behalf of his father's anti-slavery principles—and Sangamon county's representative in the Illinois General Assembly. John Cook died in 1910 at his home near Ransom, Michigan, 28 miles southwest of Adrian, in Hillsdale county.

There is no record that Daniel Pope Cook ever had the pleasure of visiting the site of the great county that was to be named after him when that county was created by an act of the Illinois legislature on Jan. 15, 1831, less than four years following his death.

Local historians at Georgetown, Kentucky, seat of Scott county, report they know nothing of Daniel Pope Cook—nothing regarding his birthplace, early life in their community, nor even the whereabouts of his grave. Such is understandable for it was not there but in young Illinois that Cook made his contributions to society. As a fitting tribute to the memory of the great man, Cook county could do well to seek out his grave, if possible, and there erect a suitably inscribed tablet commemorating his deeds.

* * *

That a large portion of present Cook county and a huge

chunk of northern Illinois are in Illinois at all is due to an afterthought on the part of Nathaniel Pope, lone delegate in the House of Representatives for the Illinois territory. We speak of the 8,000-square-mile territory in Illinois lying north of an east-west line drawn thru 75th street on Chicago's south side and extending westward across the state.

While the enabling act for statehood was under consideration by Congress in 1818, Pope noted that the territorial legislature, in its hasty drafting of its memorial, had included within the state's proposed boundaries only a tiny, four-mile stretch of the shore of Lake Michigan lying between the aforementioned 75th street and the Indiana state boundary.

That the new state was not to include the prospective shipping port at the mouth of the Chicago river, together with other highly desirable shore line to the north, weighed heavily upon Pope. So before it was too late, he introduced his own amendment to fix the northern boundary of the state on the line of forty-one degrees and thirty minutes north latitude, which was about 41 miles north of the line fixed by the bill.

Pope's amendment was approved by both houses of Congress and incorporated in the act by the time it reached the president. And Monroe, having previously proclaimed both the Lake Michigan shoreline as well as the black prairies to the west as being "worthless," naturally had no objection to the inclusion of this land if the new state was so brash as to want it. He signed the act and the northern boundary of Illinois thereby was fixed where it is today.

* * *

Wisconsin's Effort Fails

Wisconsin, which was admitted to the union in 1848, made unsuccessful attempts in 1840 and for the next few years to have "Pope's addition" taken away from Illinois and given to Wisconsin on the grounds that the northern boundary of Illinois was contrary to that suggested for future states in the

Ordinance of 1787 that governed the Northwest territory.

Fearing that the public debt in the new state of Illinois would be too great for taxpayers to bear, a large number of the residents of northern Illinois favored the merger with Wisconsin and on July 6, 1840 held a convention at Rockford, proclaiming the fourteen northern counties of Illinois to be in Wisconsin territory.

Illinois hotly rejected the idea, however, and neither the northern residents nor Wisconsin could muster strength to get Congress to make the change, which is why Cook county today remains in Illinois instead of being in Wisconsin. There is little evidence that of any of the residents of Cook county favored the secession proposal. * * *

During the years immediately preceding the creation of Cook county, there were a few items of historical note regarding the tiny community around Fort Dearborn that should be mentioned.

What may have been the first tax assessment ever made in the area that now is Cook county occurred in 1823 when officials of Fulton county, to which most of northern Illinois was attached, levied a tax of five mills to the dollar (50 cents on each \$100 of assessed value).

This applied to personal property only, and even household furniture was exempt. That it did not cover real estate was because, at that time, the land about the fort was owned by the federal government, and many of the dozen or fewer families who occupied it were squatters.

With the assessed valuation of all such taxable property fixed at \$2,284, the tax totaled only \$11.42. It was collected by Amherst C. Ranson, a justice of the peace.¹ It is possible that Ranson was from elsewhere in the state, the state's legal records showing that John Kinzie was justice of the peace in

1. Andreas, *History of Chicago*, Vol. 1, p. 174.

the Chicago settlement from 1821 to 1825.

The area's second tax assessment of which there is record was that made by John L. Bogardus, Peoria county assessor, in 1825. (Cook county by that time, as explained earlier, was in Putnam county, but was under the jurisdiction of Peoria county officials.) That tax, too, covered only personal property, and the rate by then had doubled. It was \$1 on each \$100 of assessed value.

There were 14 taxpayers living in the Chicago area. Their 1825 assessed valuation totaled \$9,047, and their combined taxes, \$90.47.

These taxpayers, their valuations, and their tax bills were:

Name	Valuation	Tax
Beaubien, John B.	\$1,000.....	\$10.00
Clybourne, Jonas	625.....	6.25
Clark, John K.	250.....	2.50
Crafts, John	5,000.....	50.00
Clermont, Jeremy	100.....	1.00
Coutra, Louis	50.....	.50
Kinzie, John	500.....	5.00
Laframboise, Claude	100.....	1.00
Laframboise, Joseph	50.....	.50
McKee David	100.....	1.00
Piche, Peter	100.....	1.00
Robinson, Alexander	200.....	2.00
Wolcott, Alexander	572.....	5.72
Wilemet (Ouilmette), Antoine....	400.....	4.00

Only a portion of these first taxpayers lived within the shadow of the fort. Clybourne and Clark lived several miles up the north branch of the Chicago river, and the Laframboise men (brothers) and Robinson lived at Hardscrabble, some five miles up the south branch. The largest taxpayer, Crafts, was the operator of an Indian trading post and his assessment would have covered his stocks.

Low Taxes, Few Benefits

If present-day taxpayers, whose rate is in the neighborhood of \$3.75 to \$4.00 on each \$100 of assessed value, yearn for the "good old days" when the rate was only \$1.00, they should remember that taxpayers of those times, including 1825, had no public schools, no streets or roads, no fire or police protection, no sewers, no running water, no health departments (deadly cholera epidemics sometimes ran unchecked), and no care was provided for the destitute and the indigent sick.

They also should know that the prevailing wage for working men in those frontier days was 50 cents per day, and sometimes only \$10 per month.

If one figures the present average working wage for Cook county residents at \$16 per day, it can be seen that altho current taxes appear some four times higher, wages are about 32 times greater. The purchasing power of the dollar today, however, is only about 22 cents as compared with the 100-cent dollar of 1825.¹

Boiled down for comparison, this means that local taxes in 1825, when adjusted to wage and dollar-valuation differentials, were roughly three times greater than at present, and it still should be borne in mind that those early taxpayers received practically no benefits from their tax dollars.

(It is true that those frontiersmen and their families had the federal military protection accorded by Fort Dearborn, but only when the fort was garrisoned. During the 1820s there were periods of two and three years at a stretch when the fort went unmanned.)

The first election held in the area that now includes Cook county was on Aug. 7, 1826 when the area, tho technically in Putnam county, still was under the temporary jurisdiction of Peoria county.

1. Computed, in part, from information contained in Cost of Living Index, Federal Reserve Bank of New York.

There was but one precinct and it embraced the entire area lying east of the DuPage river. The polling place was the Indian Agency House, next to Fort Dearborn, and the judges of election were Alexander Wolcott, John Kinzie and John B. Beaubien.

Of the 35 who voted (21 had French names), all cast their ballots for the candidates running on the Whig ticket—Ninian Edwards for governor, Samuel H. Thompson for lieutenant governor, and Daniel P. Cook for congressman.

(This was the election, as explained previously, that was to be so ruinous to the brilliant, short-lived Cook after whom Cook county was named. Here we also see that Cook, tho earlier a Democrat, now had switched to the Whig ticket.)

* * *

During this "pre-dawn" era, just before the advent of Cook county and Chicago town government, the residents of the area, some of whom were survivors of the Fort Dearborn massacre of 1812, lived in perpetual fear of another Indian uprising, but because these Indian scares extended into the early days of the county government, they shall be mentioned in more detail later on.

* * *

As a guidepost to which the reader may refer while the formation of early government is being unfolded, we here list population figures for the residents of the Fort Dearborn settlement, including the more fearless who lived a few miles up both branches of the Chicago river. No federal census having been taken, the figures are estimates from the best available sources.

Year	Population	Year	Population
1829	30	1834	1,800
1830	45	1835	3,265
1831	60	1836	3,820
1832	150	1837	4,170
1833	350		

CHAPTER 4

COUNTY GOVERNMENT TAKES SHAPE

IN passing the act that created Cook county on Jan. 15, 1831, the state legislature at the same time designated the unincorporated settlement at the mouth of the Chicago river as the new county's seat.

By then this settlement was being called Chicago and had a population estimated at between 50 and 60. The entire population of the county, which then covered an area two and one-half times the present size, may have been upwards of 100 whites, scattered among such settlements as Chicago, Hardscrabble (some five miles up the south branch of the river), and Hickory Creek (on the edge of the present site of Joliet), with a few along the DuPage river.

The initial step in the formation of the Cook county government was the election of officials. Accordingly, on Monday, Mar. 7, 1831 an election was held at which Gholson Kercheval and Samuel Miller of Chicago, and James Walker, who lived on the DuPage river, were elected county commissioners; James Kinsey, sheriff; and John K. Clark, coroner.

These officials were sworn in the following day by John S.

C. Hogan, a justice of the peace of Peoria county, and the three commissioners promptly adjourned to the magazine (powder room) of nearby Fort Dearborn where they conducted the first county board meeting. With the commissioners green at their new jobs, and having many things to attend to, the meeting lasted two days.

Among other business, the new board appointed William See (blacksmith and Methodist minister) as county clerk, Archibald Clybourn, treasurer, and recommended that the governor appoint Jededah Wooley as county surveyor. (The appointment of Wooley was made soon thereafter by the state legislature and approved by the governor.)

(No mention is made in any records of a local prosecuting attorney for that time, but there is a statement in the Senate Journal of 1834-35 that James Grant was "circuit attorney" for the Sixth Judicial Circuit which then was comprised of most of northern Illinois.)

At this first meeting the board also adopted a resolution to seek from the state 10 acres of land, including the site of the present Cook county court house, for public building purposes. (The grant later was made by the state canal commission, and the county sold a portion of the tract to raise money for the construction of public buildings.)

Three voting precincts also were established. One was Chicago precinct, which included the eastern portion of the county, another the Hickory Creek precinct that covered the south end of the county, including much of present Will county, and the third was the DuPage precinct for the western portion of the county.

Names also were selected of those who were to serve on petit and grand juries, and the county clerk was instructed to perform the duties of the board between regular monthly meetings when "urgent" matters arose, such as "issuing licenses and transacting other county business."

On April 13, however, the board saw fit to call a special meeting at which it levied a tax of one-half of one per cent (50 cents on each \$100 of assessed value) on "town lots, pleasure carriages, distilleries, all horses, mules, and neat cattle above the age of three years; on watches, with their appurtenances, and on all clocks."

Whether this was merely the county government's portion of the tax, or whether it constituted the entire tax is not clear, tho probably the latter was the case, the town of Chicago not yet having been incorporated. State revenues were not alluded to. It also will be seen that this tax covered real estate, possibly for the first time.

At this special meeting tavern licenses were issued to the settlement's Elijah Wentworth for \$7, to Samuel Miller for \$5, and the license was renewed which permitted Russel E. Heacock of Hardscrabble to keep a tavern in his residence. (This license originally had been issued on June 3, 1830 by Peoria county officials.)

The taverns of those days, it will be remembered, meant hostleries where could be had both board and lodging as well as spirited refreshments. They also included accommodations for the horses of the weary travelers.

Price Regulations Established

At the same time that it issued the tavern licenses, the board set maximum prices that tavern keepers could charge. This undoubtedly was the first time that the policy of regulating prices was invoked in Cook county. The commissioners thought it necessary, however, because with a shortage of sleeping, eating, and drinking establishments, and with an ever-increasing number of settlers and travelers coming into the area, the tavern owners of that day were inclined to jack their prices to unreasonable limits.

The prices established by the board were in terms of cents and fractions of cents because at that time no dimes or nickels

had yet been minted and the common small coin then in circulation was the "York shilling" or "nine pence," worth twelve and one-half cents.

There also appears to have been in use a coin worth but half a shilling, for some of the prices, such as that of a gill of whisky, are listed at six and one-fourth cents. It is doubtful, however, that many of the hard-drinking frontiersmen limited themselves to six and one-fourth cents worth of whisky.

Following are the prices fixed by the board:

Each half pint of wine, rum, or brandy	\$.18¾
Each pint do .....	.37½
Each half pint of gin .....	.18¾
Each pint do .....	.31¼
Each gill of whisky .....	.06¼
Each half pint do .....	.12½
Each pint do .....	.18¾
For each breakfast and supper .....	.25
For each dinner .....	.37½
For each horse fed .....	.25
Keeping horse one night .....	.50
Lodging for each man per night .....	.12½
For cider or beer, one pint .....	.06¼
For cider or beer, one quart .....	.12½

At this busy meeting the commissioners also licensed Robert A. Kinzie, Samuel Miller, and one B. Laughton as merchants, and James Kinzie as an auctioneer.

Plans for establishing a ferry that would carry traffic across the river also were formed and a scow purchased from Sam Miller for \$65. The ferryman, the board decided, should post a \$200 bond and pay the county treasurer \$50 for the franchise. It also was decreed that no charges were to be made for ferrying local persons and their vehicles, and that outsiders were to be charged a "reasonable" fee.

At the next meeting, June 6, the board granted the ferry

franchise to the lone applicant, Mark Beaubien.

This, therefore, became the first public transportation franchise issued in the then unincorporated area that in time was to become the great city. The simplicity of its issuance was in notable contrast to great franchise-agreement fights, involving millions of dollars, that have marked the city's transportation problems down to the present times.

Tired Of It All

The ferry system worked fairly well for a while, but in time Mr. Beaubien grew disgruntled and then weary. With the population expanding (it then had grown to 60) and with new faces appearing upon the scene, arguments naturally arose as to which ones should be charged. Then Mark began wondering why he should exert himself at all for persons who did not pay. Nor were there any daylight hours in which he could enjoy his favorite sport—riding his own pony in horse races.

The result was that the gentleman began disappearing for hours at a time, leaving those who wished to cross the river to ferry for themselves.

Bridges would help solve the problem, the board decided, and in due time two flimsy structures were thrown up, one connecting the north bank of the river with the south bank, and the other spanning the south branch. The location of the first did not suit certain merchants, however, with the result that one dark night the bridge disappeared completely. No one could or would say who had destroyed it. Needless to say, the board rebuilt the bridge at a less vulnerable location.

At the June 6 meeting the board also took its first steps in laying out a county highway program. It decided the new county needed two roads, one of which was to run "from the town of Chicago to the house of B. Lawton, from thence to the house of James Walker, on the DuPage river, and so on to the west line of the county."

The other road, the commissioners decreed, was to run "from

the town of Chicago, the nearest and best way to the house of Widow Brown, on Hycory creek." Two three-man commissions, one for each road, were named to work out the details.

Both roads eventually came into being. The DuPage road followed approximately the line of Madison street to Ogden avenue, then south-westerly to Riverside, then westerly to the DuPage river and beyond.

The Widow Brown road ran southward on what now is State street, thence south-westerly on the present Archer avenue. The stream known as Hickory creek flows westerly, emptying into the Des Plaines river near the present site of Joliet. Widow Brown's house was a "mile or two" up the creek, and her deceased husband reputedly was the first white man buried in what now is Will county.¹

In 1830, a year before Cook county was formed, an incident occurred that is worth relating, both because it presents a picture of the amusement life of that day and because it involved a young man, Gholson Kercheval, who within less than a year was to be elected as a member of the first board of county commissioners. For this story we are indebted to Mrs. John H. Kinzie who recounted it in *Wau-Bun*, her recollections of early Chicago days, written some one hundred years ago.

The handful of residents at the new Hickory Creek settlement (near the present site of Joliet) were holding a dance and, wishing to promote friendship, invited the young single men and women from the neighboring settlement of Chicago to attend.

In the frontier settlements of those days, however, there always was a shortage of young unmarried ladies, so when time for departure came, the Chicago cavalcade was found to consist of but three young men—Kercheval, Medard Beaubien, and Robert Kinzie.

1. Maue, *History of Will County*, p. 166.

Splendor Rides Forth

What they lacked in numbers, tho, they made up for in elegance and showmanship. For the occasion they changed from homespun raiment to clothes that had a "New York" look, polished their boots and saddles, and groomed their sleek riding horses, one of which was borrowed from an officer at Fort Dearborn.

The journey took them half a day, but it still was daylight when they reached their destination. Never had the maidens of Hickory Creek beheld such gallant splendor, and saying that they were overwhelmed is an understatement.

The three city slickers with the polished manners were frank to admit they had come down to Hickory Creek to "take the rag off the bush," or as one might say at a much later date, the "real cool cats" had come to the "jam session" to "rock 'n' roll."

Their execution of the pigeon-wing and double-shuffle while the fiddler played "hoe corn and dig potatoes" was something "out of this world," at least as far as the beautiful belles of the ball were concerned. The enraptured young ladies vied for dances with the dazzling visitors, totally ignoring their rustic sweethearts who knew only a few awkward stomps.

As the night of revelry wore on, the rural swains grew more and more sullen, and gradually, one after another, disappeared from the floor.

"What's the matter with your men down here?" chided the young Chicagoans. "Did they get tired and go home to bed?" The girls, if they heard at all, answered only with sweet smiles and begged for more dances.

Dawn was just streaking the sky as the ball ended and the three young visitors, still flushed with the unquestioned success of their night's conquest, went to the nearby stable to get their horses for the ride home. But lo, when they led their mounts out into the daylight, they hardly recognized the poor

beasts. The once proud creatures had been shorn of their flowing manes, and their beautiful tails had been shaved bare.

Recovering from the initial shock, the young men's feelings turned to rage, but there was no one within sight with whom they could pick a fight. The early-morning songs of the birds in the trees fell upon unheeding ears.

What would the folks at home have to say? How would the army officer feel about his once-beautiful horse? Did the horses, themselves, realize how terrible they looked?

It was too much for young Kercheval, he who soon was to become a county commissioner. According to Mrs. Kinzie, the distraught young man "sat down on a log and cried outright."

Nor was their embarrassment alleviated upon their return to the Chicago settlement. There was no way for them to sneak home unnoticed. They were seen coming across the treeless flatlands, and the entire population of some 40 or 50 persons turned out to welcome the young cavaliers.

At first the townspeople were disbelieving of what they saw. Then followed the inevitable shouts of derisive laughter and mortifying jibes, with only here and there a few expressions of sympathy.

It is further recorded that the young men entertained no further desire to revisit Hickory Creek. In all fairness to Gholson Kercheval, however, it should be noted that with the regrowth of hair on his horse's tail, his resentment dissipated to the extent that a year later, as county commissioner, he voted to build a road to the "house of Widow Brown, on Hycory Creek."

The spirited young Kercheval also was to further prove his merit soon thereafter by organizing Chicago's first militia company, of which he was captain, and later becoming postmaster and then Chicago's representative in the state legislature.

* * *

By 1832 the sessions of the Circuit court had been moved out of the fort and were being held in the home of Sheriff James Kinzie. That year, also, the county board constructed at a cost of \$12 the first "public building," if an "estray-pen" can be classified as such.

This enclosure, which the builder, Samuel Miller, agreed to erect for \$20, was to confine, until their owners claimed them, all stray cattle, horses, and hogs that were roaming loose and destroying gardens. That the commissioners deducted \$8 from the contract price was because the pen did not meet specifications, possibly not being altogether hog-tight.

By 1833 the settlement's population had risen to 350, an increase of 200 over that of 1832, and with it came a demand for street improvements. In fact, with the early-spring thaw, the "bottom dropped out" of the streets, rendering some of them impassable quagmires. The settlement, it should be remembered, was springing up on the site of Chicago's present "loop," where the land was low and marshy.

The responsibility for street repairs at that time rested solely with the county commissioners, the town of Chicago not yet having been incorporated.

Having no funds in their young treasury, the commissioners voted that spring to borrow \$2,000 for one year at ten per cent interest. But much to their consternation, no one would lend the county the money.

Bankers Guessed Incorrectly

In the first place, there were as yet no local banks, and the directors of the established banks in such far-away places as the southern Illinois towns were of the expressed belief that the Chicago settlement never would amount to anything and was a poor money risk.

Early settlers of the area had little money to lend, and although speculators from the East were beginning to descend upon the settlement, they were investing their capital in lots

and reselling almost immediately to other speculators at double and treble prices. A mere ten per cent interest was no inducement whatever.

Unable to raise funds, and with the local citizenry growing more indignant and more vociferous by the day, the conscientious, harrassed commissioners, according to some accounts, took what they thought was the only way out, resigning in June of 1833.¹

Tho their "resigning" offers a neat climax to the dilemma in which the commissioners found themselves, for the sake of accuracy we are compelled to note our inability to verify this point.

There is the possibility, of course, that if they did "resign," they may have reconsidered their hasty action and returned to their offices. (As commissioners they received pay of \$1.50 per day—and that only for days on which they attended meetings.)

A compilation of early office holders by Historian Andreas indicates that altho our previously-mentioned young hero, Gholson Kercheval, resigned in July of 1831, some four months after being elected, no commissioners are shown to have resigned during 1833 when the roads were so bad.

(By contrast with those times, Cook county's credit at present is unexcelled in municipal finance circles. The county board readily can and does sell millions of dollars worth of public-approved bonds, some of which in recent years have borne interest as low as two per cent.)

Settlers about Chicago and those who were pushing on to the fertile lands in the northwestern part of the young state of Illinois during the late 1820s and early 1830s lived in almost continuous fear that the Indians who had been crowded from the area would return to annihilate the whites.

The Indians would have, too, had they been stronger. In

1. Chamberlin, *Chicago and Its Suburbs*, 1874, p. 39.

retrospect, however, it can be seen that they already realized the hopelessness of the situation and were submitting, tho grudgingly, to the unrelenting forces of civilization. There are strong points in history which indicate that even the small Black Hawk War might have been avoided had there been more diplomacy and less aggressiveness on the part of "down-state" volunteer militiamen, mostly adventurous youngsters, who were "just itchin'" to do some Indian fighting.

The Winnebago Scare

The "Winnebago scare" that occurred in 1827, however, was very real to the Chicago settlers, a few of whom were survivors of the Fort Dearborn massacre of 1812.

Several hundred Potawatomie Indians, members of Chief Big Foot's band from the Lake Geneva (Wisconsin) area, were encamped about Fort Dearborn which then was ungarrisoned. They had come to the fort at the behest of the United States government to collect their annual monetary payments as provided in previous treaty agreements.

After the payments had been made that day, the settlers assumed that the Indians would start homeward, at once, but instead, the tribesmen stayed overnight, possibly to spend a large portion of their funds for whisky and simple articles that were to be had at the trading post.

To worsen their fears, however, an electrical storm arose that evening, one bolt of lightning setting fire to and destroying the unoccupied soldier barracks in which the settlers were holding a dance. The blaze also destroyed a storehouse and a portion of the guard house before the volunteer firemen—men, women, and children—could extinguish it with water carried from the river in buckets.

During the fire the Potawatomes, instead of helping fight the blaze, stood by and grunted, probably with a degree of deep satisfaction.

Altho the Indians departed the next day, this seeming hos-

tility had the settlers on nervous edge, so that a week later, when Gov. Lewis Cass of Michigan arrived with news of Indian outbreak (the Winnebago War) around Prairie du Chien, in what now is southwestern Wisconsin, they felt certain that the Chicago settlement was due for another annihilating attack.

Accordingly, one of the settlers, Gurdon S. Hubbard, was dispatched on horseback to the nearest sizable settlement, Danville, 125 miles to the south, for help. Riding day and night across country, swimming his horse across rivers, Hubbard reached Danville where he recruited from among townsmen and farmers fifty mounted volunteers to come to the defense of Chicago. Armed with squirrel rifles—there weren't enough to go around—and knives, the calvacade followed Hubbard back to Chicago. Hubbard had been away but seven days in accomplishing his mission.

The Indian attack never materialized, however, and after word was received that things had quieted down in the Indian country to the northwest, the Danville volunteers returned home, but not before being feted at a farewell party, given in appreciation by the Chicago settlers. (Such a rousing time was had that one religious zealot reputedly seized upon the occasion to exhort the rough-and-ready visitors in the ways of a more-religious life.)

The following year (1828) the War Department sent troops who re-occupied the fort and remained in peaceful occupation for some three years. They were removed in May of 1831, however, and a year later another scare developed.

In April of 1832 a small number from the Saux (Sac) and Fox tribes, which had been crowded out of the state by the whites, returned peacefully to their homelands in northwestern Illinois, thereby precipitating the Black Hawk War. The scattered settlers thruout the northern part of the state flocked to Fort Dearborn and Peoria for protection, and volunteer forces

kept guard.

General Scott Arrives

Calls for help this time brought militiamen from Michigan, and two companies of the regular army, stationed at Fort Niagara. They arrived at Fort Dearborn in June, and before the end of the month, a thousand troops, under the command of General Winfield S. Scott, arrived upon the scene. Gen. Scott's forces had been sent from Fort Monroe, Va., and came by water, using the new Erie canal and the Great Lakes route. Their purpose was not to just protect the Chicago settlement, but to travel to the scene of the latest uprisings and wipe out the last vestiges of Indian opposition.

As they were coming across the Great Lakes by boat, cholera broke out among Gen. Scott's troops. Several died and were buried at sea. Moreover, the epidemic continued unabated after they landed at Fort Dearborn and even spread among some of the settlers. Gen. Scott lost, altogether, more than 100 men, and scores of others who contracted the disease were incapacitated for weeks.

In the Chicago settlement, which now was the seat of the 18-months-old Cook county, Gen. Scott's forces camped at Wolf's Point, the area on the west bank of the Chicago river where the river branched both north and south. As the cholera victims died they were wrapped in their own blankets and buried in the nearby sands.

Army Trail Established

Gen. Scott's army broke camp on July 20 for a halting march to the scene of the Indian outbreak. Upon reaching the Des Plaines river, at the present site of Riverside, the sickened forces established camp for a 10-day stay. Leaving word that they were to proceed, when able, Gen. Scott, with 12 men and two supply wagons, went on ahead.

The route that the main body of the army followed is recounted here because it soon was to become an important

road leading west and north from Chicago, a portion of which, known as the Army Trail, still is in use.

From the Des Plaines river encampment, the army, including 50 horse-drawn wagons heavily laden with supplies and sick soldiers, marched northward to what now is Maywood, then westerly on an Indian trail (present-day Lake street) to what now is Addison in DuPage county where it camped the first night.

From Addison the army marched westerly (present-day Army Trail) to "Gilbert's Grove" on the DuPage river, then northwesterly to the Fox River, crossing at a point three miles below what now is Elgin, then thru the "Pigeon Woods" to what now is Belvidere, then to an old Indian village, near the present site of Beloit, Wis.

With the cholera epidemic still raging, the army camped for a week at the Beloit site and there learned of the final battle of the Black Hawk War which had been fought on Aug. 2 near the mouth of the Bad Axe river in what now is Vernon county, Wis.

The heavy wagons and trampling feet of the horses and marching men not only had widened the Indian trail, but wore in the sod a roadway of sufficient depth that from thenceforth it became the road that most settlers would follow into the new territory to the northwest of Chicago.

CHAPTER 5

CHE-CAU-GOU, MEANING "GREAT"

BECAUSE the establishing of Chicago officially as first a town and then a city has been dwelt upon at length in numerous histories of the city, itself, only the barest details of this will be recounted here in outlining the county's growth.

The first plat of Chicago, completed Aug. 4, 1830, was made by James Thompson at the direction of the canal commission. As laid out, the town occupied approximately one-third square mile of land, including river. Its street boundaries were State on the east, Madison on the south, Desplaines on the west, and Kinzie on the north.

It was not until Aug. 10, 1833, one and one-half years after Cook county was created, that the frontier settlement of Chicago was incorporated as a town. During that year its population jumped from approximately 150 to some 1,800. (It should be remembered that with the final defeat of Black Hawk in 1832, settlers and, more particularly, land speculators no longer feared to come to Chicago.)

Even before its incorporation as a town the settlement about Fort Dearborn was being called Chicago.



"Chicagou," a powerful chief of the Illinois Indians, as visualized 150 years later by sculptor Edward Kemeys (1843-1907). Executed in bronze in 1895, the plaque hangs in lobby of Marquette building, 140 S. Dearborn st., Chicago. Files of Chicago Historical Society say the chief "visited France in 1725, where he was presented with a splendid snuff box by the Duchesse of Orleans at Versailles."

No one probably ever can say with certainty the original meaning of the word, Chicago. The name is a shortened form of an Indian word, but there has been no agreement even as to which Indian word.

The Indians, having no written language, naturally could not spell out their words, so early whites—mostly fur traders, explorers, missionaries and voyagers—tried to spell the word the way it sounded. But the various tribes had different dialects and pronunciations, and even different meanings for words that sounded something like Chicago.

In 1680, when Father Hennepin was writing of LaSalle's expeditions, he titled a chapter: "An account of the building of a new fort on the river of the Illinois, named by the savages Che-cau-gou, and by us Fort Creveceaur."

(This fort was built by La Salle during the winter of 1679-80 at what is now Peoria. In the winter of 1682-83, however, La Salle had the fort abandoned and re-established at Starved Rock, farther up the Illinois river, naming it Fort St. Louis.)

The Indians at that time, according to the earliest writers, were calling the Illinois river the Che-cau-gou, the word meaning "great" or "strong."

La Salle applied the name, Che-cau-gou, to the upper branch of the Illinois river, now known as the Des Plaines. (The Des Plaines and Kankakee rivers merge to form the Illinois.) Shortly thereafter La Salle and others began calling the narrow water divide between the Des Plaines river and the "arm" or "channel" of Lake Michigan the Chicago Portage, altho the word, Chicago, then was spelled in many ways. And shortly thereafter they referred to this Lake Michigan "channel" as the Chicago river, which name was to stick and eventually give a great city its name.

To support this meaning of great or strong, Historian Andreas wrote: "St. Cosme, visiting this locality in 1699 and

again in 1700, spells the name variously; as Chikagu, Chikagou, Chicagu, Chicago, and Chicaqu. The latter spelling is equivalent to Chicaque, or Checaqua, which was the name borne by a long line of Illinois chiefs—and as applied to them, would mean the great, or powerful, chiefs.”¹

To inject confusion, however, the Chippewas had a word, shegahg, meaning skunk, and she-gau-ga-winzhe, supposedly meaning skunk-weed and also wild onion. And since this area around the little river running into Lake Michigan was known to have both wild onions and skunks, by deduction detractors of the fair city might say that Chicago may have been named after either wild onions or skunks.

The comparatively faint support for such doubtful meanings, however, does include the fact that Indians once deeded to William Murray, land speculator, a tract extending “up the Illinois to Chicagou or Garlick Creek.” Thus by association and presumption the point here is made that Chicagou could have meant “garlick,” that this “garlick” is the same as present day garlic, and that it might mean onions to Indians.

It also is to be remembered that Che-ca-gua was the name of a noted Sac chief, and meant in the dialect of that tribe “he that stands by the tree.” The Pottawatomie Indians also had a word, choc-ca-go, that meant “destitute.”

With its steadily-growing population, Chicago soon was to find its town form of government inadequate, so on March 4, 1837 it was incorporated as a city by an act of the state legislature. In May William B. Ogden was elected its first mayor. At that time the city’s population was estimated at slightly in excess of 4,000.

* * *

Chicago Goes To Press

Cook county’s first newspaper was the Chicago Democrat,

1. Andreas, History of Chicago, p. 37.

the first issue of which appeared Nov. 26, 1833. (Complete files of the paper are carefully preserved by the Chicago Historical Society and are a fount of information for historians.) A four-page, six-column affair, it was published each Tuesday in the small building that then stood on the south-west corner of South Water and Clark streets.

The owner-publisher was John Calhoun who came to Chicago from Watertown, N. Y. Subscription price was \$2.50 per year. Calhoun sold the paper on Nov. 23, 1836 to the fabulous "Long John" Wentworth who later became mayor of Chicago.

In the spring of 1837 the county board appointed Calhoun county treasurer, and as such Calhoun made the 1837 and 1838 assessments. Following a revision of the state revenue laws, Calhoun was appointed county collector, serving in that capacity from 1839 until 1841 when he was elected alderman from the second ward.

In contrast to today's huge metropolitan dailies which are capable of editing, printing, and distributing news within minutes after it is turned in by reporters, the printing of the Democrat (and other early newspapers) was a slow, laborious process.

Local news coverage was meager and inadequate, the publisher quite possibly feeling that since the community was small (pop. 350), everybody already would have heard of local happenings before he could print them in the paper the following Tuesday. Besides, with little or no help, Publisher Calhoun was too busy rounding up advertising, setting type by hand, and running off the copies on a hand press to spend much time in gathering and writing news.

There being no wire services in that day, the publisher obtained national and foreign news by reprinting stories published weeks previously in eastern newspapers and brought to Chicago by the mail carrier who arrived once a week on horseback.

But no matter how slow the news of national affairs was in reaching Chicago, there were items that should have been of interest to even the frontiersmen. For example, in this first issue of the Democrat there appears a reprint of a Washington Globe article in which the Secretary of the Treasury announced that he was prepared to pay off the entire national debt of \$2,041,611 which consisted of stock that bore interest of 4.5 per cent. (As of Oct. 28, 1958 the national debt was \$280,821,613,238.)

This and most of the subsequent issues of the Democrat for the next few years were filled with essays on diversified subjects which, tho of little practical bearing upon the lives of the readers of that day, did partly fill a void that existed because there were no libraries, few schools and churches, and few forms of entertainment. They also served as handy "filler" for the harried editor.

One of the shorter quotations in this first issue follows:

"Old Maids—I consider an unmarried lady declining into the vale of years, as one of those charming countries bordering on China, that lies waste for want of proper inhabitants. We are not to accuse the country, but some of its neighbors, who are insensible of its beauties, though at liberty to enter and cultivate the soil.—Goldsmith."

The First Crime Story

A local story, typical of the reporting of the times, and quite possibly the first "crime" story ever published in Chicago, appears without headline and is buried deep in non-news matter on page three of the Dec. 3, 1833 Democrat. It reads:

"We admonish our neighbors to be on their guard against the approach of certain unwelcome midnight visitors (mis-spelling theirs) who seem to be prowling about our town. On Saturday night last, some person entered the Office of Col. Owen, Indian Agent, and broke open a table drawer containing eight or ten dollars in specie and some private papers which

with a small trunk, containing a few articles of Indian Jewelry, and some valuable papers were taken some rods from the Office, where they were next morning found completely divested of the precious metals, but the papers were uninjured. The villain was no doubt greatly disappointed to the extent of his anticipated prize."

Each edition of the Democrat also carried a column devoted to poetry, much of which was submitted by sentimental readers who understood rime if not meter. In some issues the poetry column was advanced to the front page, along with advertisements, while such news items as canal building, fires, and the deaths of prominent citizens, if printed at all, were relegated to inside pages and buried so deep in fine print that persons doing research work today often find a magnifying glass of great help.

Display advertising, as found in modern newspapers, was unknown to the Democrat whose ads were limited to mere one-column notices. A typical ad which appeared in the Dec. 3, 1883 issue reads:

P. F. Peck

Corner of Lacelle (La Salle) and South Water Streets

Has now on hand, many staple articles requisite to the exigencies of use and consumption; and intends in future to keep a general and full supply. A share of public patronage is respectfully solicited.

His stock comprises,

Dry Goods, Hardware, Groceries, Crockery, Boots & Shoes, Hats and a variety of miscellaneous articles.

To the citizens of Chicago, and the adjacent country, he tenders his acknowledgements for past favors. Now on hand,

50 bbls. Superfine Flour

400 galls. Smith's Ohio WHISKEY, by the barrel.

As a public service the Democrat carried a column titled "Chicago Prices Current." The readers presumably were to distinguish between the commodities that wholesalers and processors were buying from the public, and those that retailers were selling.

From the Dec. 3, 1833 quotations we learn that the price of fresh beef was two to four cents per pound, dried beef, 10 to 12 cents, and salt beef \$8 per barrel; pork \$10 to \$14 per barrel, and dried venison, 12 cents per pound.

Flour was \$5 to \$6.50 per barrel, and Indian meal, 63 to 75 cents per bushel (unless this was a misprint). Both corn and oats were 63 to 75 cents per bushel, and wheat, 50 to 63 cents. *

Keg butter was 17 to 19 cents per pound; lard, 10 to 13 cents; and cheese, nine to 11 cents; white beans, \$1.25 to \$1.50 per bushel, and potatoes, 50 to 75 cents per bushel.

Tallow was 10 cents per pound; dry hides, nine to 10 cents per pound, wet hides, four to five cents; tallow candles, 15 to 16 cents per pound; bar soap, 15 to 16 cents per pound, and beeswax, 18 cents per pound.

The price of tea ranged from 65 cents to \$1.25 per pound; coffee, 17 to 18 cents per pound; loaf sugar, 20 cents; lump sugar, 16 cents, and brown sugar, 14 to 15 cents. Molasses was 62 to 75 cents per gallon, and rice, seven to eight cents per pound.

Barrel whisky was 35 to 40 cents per gallon; sperm oil, \$1.50 per gallon; brown bed sheeting, 13 to 15 cents per yard, and bleached, 18 to 28 cents; brown shirt cloth, nine to 10 cents per yard, and bleached, 12 to 18 cents. Assorted calicoes were 15 to 38 cents per yard.

Peru iron was seven to nine cents per pound; cast steel, 27 to 30 cents; German steel, 18 to 21 cents; wro't nails, 17 to 18 cents; and cut nails, nine to 10 cents. Muskrat pelts were 16 to 18 cents each, and raccoon skins, 20 to 25 cents.

The half-dozen stores of the time often advertised that the produce of farmers would be accepted in trade for merchandise. (One can imagine the consternation that might ensue now were a farmer and his family to appear in a large State street store carrying a dozen live chickens, a basket of eggs, a few

pounds of home-churned butter, and some raw muskrat pelts which they wished to exchange for goods.)

Sandwiched in with the ads in the Dec. 17, 1833 issue was this notice:

"The office of the clerk of the Circuit and county courts, is removed to the building one door west of the house of Col. Owen."

Once-a-week Mail

Without headline, of course, there appeared in the Jan. 7, 1834 issue of the *Chicago Democrat*, on page three, the following notice which, by modern journalistic standards, might have rated the front page:

"We are requested to state that a general meeting of the citizens of Chicago and Cook county, will take place at the Eagle Hotel, (Mr. A. Steele's) on Saturday next, at 11 o'clock, A. M., for the purpose of taking into consideration the propriety of adopting measures, in concert with the citizens of La Porte county, Indiana, for the improvement of the Post Road leading from Detroit to this place, and also for the purpose of memorializing the Post Master General in relation to the mails.

"The importance of the subject above alluded to, to the people of Chicago, and surrounding country, is almost incalculable; and it is greatly to be hoped that the people will generally give their attendance at the hour appointed. —The very fact that we have a mail but once a week from Niles to this place, and that transported on horseback, is enough to awaken the people at once, and induce them to look to their immediate and direct interests."

Chicago at that time had a population of about 1,000, but Niles (Mich.), with a population that could be accommodated in only "nine houses," was receiving its mail three times a week.

The next issue of the *Democrat*, on Jan. 14, carried an equally obscure account that the meeting was "well attended"

and that resolutions were adopted asking both Congress and the postmaster general to improve the road from Niles to Chicago, a distance of 90 miles, so that mails could be sent more often. The resolutions were signed by John B. Beaubien, "president" (of the meeting), and J. Dean Caton, "secretary."

The pleas apparently had the desired effect. By the following year (1835) the road had been so improved that the mails were arriving more frequently—just how often is not clear—and in covered wagons.

Thomas O. Davis brought out a second weekly, the *Chicago American*, the first issue of which appeared on June 8, 1835.

In the May 28, 1836 weekly issue of the *American* appeared the following ad which reflects a nation-wide condition of that time:

\$100 REWARD

Runaway from the subscriber, living near Fredericktown, Madison county, Missouri, on the 9th day of May, 1836, a negro man by the name of Martin, about 53 years of age, 5 feet 10 or 11 inches high, of a black complexion, stout build, uncommon large arms, high forehead; rather hard features; he has had one foot badly burnt, which left a scar; had on when he left my residence, a pair of leather breeches, the body of a blue jean coat, the tail having been cut off; he took with him, also, a blue cotton frock coat, a mixed pair of breeches, and other wearing apparel not recollected, and an old black fur hat. Fifty dollars reward will be given any person who may apprehend said boy and secure him so that I can get him, and if delivered to me at Fredericktown, I will pay all reasonable charges in addition.

Josias Berryman

ALSO,

A negro man name of TITUS, being of a yellow complexion, rather forward, feminine voice, about 25 years old, belonging to Felix Gregory, living at Mine la Mote, Madison county, Mo. For the apprehension of said negro fifty dollars will be given. Address me at Fredericktown, Mo.

Felix Gregory

The Chicago Land Rush

Whereas the population of Cook county numbered some 350 in 1833, it jumped to 1,800 in 1834, and the rush was

on. The federal government on June 1, 1835 opened a land office in Chicago for the sale of properties not only in Chicago but for all of the northern district of Illinois.

With the Erie canal (then in operation ten years) a success, settlers and speculators streamed in by boat to Chicago. Others came overland by wagon and horseback, and some walked. Many of them thought of Chicago only as a gateway to the fertile lands lying to the west and northwest, and after reaching here promptly moved on to their originally-planned destinations. Others, however, saw the possibilities of Chicago, itself, and stayed. Mostly speculators, they likened the "find" of Chicago to a "strike" during a gold rush.

Fevered excitement ran high. A town lot on Water street, which originally was sold by the Canal Commission in 1832 for \$100, on March 11, 1834 sold for \$3,500, and 15 months later sold for \$15,000.

Historian Theodore Calvin Pease, in *The Frontier State* (Vol. 2, page 177, of the Centennial History of Illinois) points out that in 1835 the land sales within Chicago totaled 370,043, and in 1836 jumped to 436,992.

"In the years 1835-1837," says Pease, "land speculation was focused on Chicago. June 18, 1834, the Chicago Democrat remarked the fact that 75 buildings had been erected in Chicago since spring. By December the city had a population of 3,279. Next year strangers were crowding in so fast that for want of accommodations, they were sleeping on floors. Provisions were scarce, and flour sold for \$20 a barrel . . . Lots that in the spring of 1835 sold for \$9,000, by the end of the year were held at \$25,000; and rents were correspondingly exorbitant."

Pease might have added that many of those who came overland by wagon, lived in their wagons on the outskirts of the new village until they found housing.

Thus it was that the village of Chicago suddenly was turned into a budding young metropolis. It was incorporated as a city

by an act of the state legislature on March 4, 1837, and soon thereafter the townsmen elected William B. Ogden its first mayor.

* * *

By 1839, with Chicago's population having risen to some 4,200, with suburbs springing up about it, and with the surrounding farm lands now filled with settlers, the need for a daily newspaper was seen.

Thus it was that William Stuart, having already purchased the Chicago American, converted that weekly into a daily, an afternoon publication. Its first issue appeared on April 9 of that year. It was comparatively short-lived, however, discontinuing in 1842.

The Broad-shouldered Queen

The Chicago American was a four-page publication, and altho it now was a daily, in many respects it continued to resemble a weekly. The editors, in the first issue of this daily, carried the announcement:

"In the language of our Prospectus, we this day present to the Queen City of the State the first daily paper ever issued in Illinois."

Thus we see that Illinois not only had its first daily, but also that it was the desire of at least a few early Chicagoans that the city become known as the Queen City. (Later pages in this chapter explain other nicknames by which Chicago has been known.)

Advertisements in this April 9, 1839 issue of the American help in presenting a picture of life in those times. Here are a few:

BLOW YE TRUMPET, BLOW! Fever and Ague, look out for your shakerism.

Just received a fresh supply of Doct. John Sappington's Fever and Ague Pills, and for sale by his agent, E. Dewey, Apothecary Hall, Dearborn st.

* * *

100 bbls. superfine Flour
10 bbls. Whiskey, just received and for sale by G. S. Hubbard & Co.

* * *

1 Span large Bay Horses, 1 sett double harness and 2 good Lumber Wagons for sale. A. D. Higgins, Lake st.

* * *

Pork, Lard, & Smoked Hams

Any quantity of Mess and Prime Pork, Lard, and Smoked Hams, for sale at wholesale or retail, for Illinois Money, or Michigan Money of the following Banks: viz:—Bank of Michigan, Farmers' and Mechanic's Bank of Michigan, and the Commercial Bank at St. Joseph.

Newberry & Dole

* * *

200 Bushels of Hair, for plastering. For sale by O. H. Thompson.

* * *

Butter.—An article suitable for Cooking. For sale by Paine & Norton.

* * *

Ruta Baga Seed

Any quantity of the above article, warranted of last years growth, for sale by

W. H. & A. F. Clark
Corner of Lake & Clark sts.

* * *

Apple Butter

For sale by

J. L. Hanson

* * *

Lucifer Matches, for sale by Paine & Norton

* * *

Fire.—30,000 superior Spanish Cigars for sale at New York prices. Tuthill King.

* * *

Tho there still was no display advertising by 1839, the larger Chicago department stores at least were making their advertisements more descriptive, as witness the following that likewise appeared in the daily American's first issue:

The proprietor of the New York

CLOTHING STORE

Would again beg leave to remind the citizens of Chicago, and his old friends and patrons of the country, that he has just received, and will continue to receive, for several

weeks, additions to his already large stock of

Clothing

To which he would particularly invite your attention, knowing it to be in his power to afford his goods at much lower rates, beside the more general satisfaction of having an assortment hitherto unknown in Chicago, or in the Western country.

The subscriber would not forget to return his most sincere thanks to his friends and patrons, for their liberality, and hopes to merit a continuance of their favors by his promptness and assiduity in business, aside from all sinister inducements, which all who have called at the New York Clothing store can testify, as unparalleled in Chicago or its Vicinity. As a small sample, I will enumerate a few articles of my extensive variety:

Dress coats, various colors

Frock do do do

Hunting coats, of all kinds and qualities

Lionskin jackets, for laboring men

Monkey jackets of all kinds and quality

Superfine blue cloth jackets

Satinett jackets, well lined for winter wear

Pantaloons, superfine buckskin, cassimere, of

various patterns

Plain cassimere, of all patterns and qualities; shirts, drawers, socks and hosiery of all kinds and descriptions; sticks, satin, bombazine, mohair and silk of all kinds; valises, trunks, traveling bags of superior quality, life preservers, India rubber pillows and portmanteaus; overshoes, a superior article, worsted caps of all sizes: fur caps from \$2 to 30.

N. B. Canal contractors can be supplied on the most reasonable terms for cash, as many of my goods were expressly got up for the working community, and peculiarly adapted to such as labor on the Canal. I ask you not to take my word, but to do me the favor of calling and examining for yourselves.

T. King

B. The above articles are but a drop in the bucket of my assortment, so call and see for yourselves, at the old stand, Dearborn st., one door north of the Tremont House, Chicago.

Tho the newspapers of a hundred years ago and more were quite indifferent to local news, reporting but little of it, nevertheless it is to them that one now must turn for much of the history of those times. The great Chicago fire of 1871 destroyed

all official city and county records that had been kept during the 50-year interval since Cook county's creation.

Thus it is that in searching thru the editions of those papers which the Chicago Historical Society has been able to collect and preserve, one comes upon the April 4, 1850 issue of the Chicago Daily Democrat which, as its name indicates, had changed from weekly to daily publication.

This daily was composed of four large pages of seven columns each, and of the 28 total columns, only four were devoted to editorial matter, all found on page two. The entire first, third, and fourth pages, and a portion of the second, consisted of advertising matter.

Historical Gold Mine

Nevertheless, those four columns contained more county news, particularly as pertains to county government, than could be gleaned from the combined papers of the preceding 17 years since newspapers had started publishing in Chicago.

Occupying one of the four news columns in this issue is a table that lists all county budgets from 1831 to 1849, inclusive, which was the entire life-span of the county up to that time. It was prepared by county officials who even then pointed out that some of the county records had been destroyed by a small fire and that others had been inadequately kept. Nevertheless, as the officials and the newspaper's editor pointed out, the table could give the readers of that era a fairly accurate picture of the county's activities and expenditures.

We here copy from the table the figures for the nine months of 1831 after the first county board took office, and for the entire years of 1840 and 1849. In 1831, it should be remembered, the county had an estimated population of only 100 whites; in 1840, 10,201 and in 1849, an estimated 40,000.

	1831	1840	1849
County Commissioners	\$ 96.00	\$ 521.00	\$ 488.00
Incidental repairs, furniture, etc.	113.75	383.97	474.00

Pauper expenses	27.67	4,318.14	5,810.26
Jail—Board of prisoners, guard, etc.	none	5,493.82	3,453.31
Circuit and Cook county courts	34.00	1,116.92	2,126.26
Elections	6.00	235.35	450.80
Stationery	25.00	159.78	689.50
Roads & Bridges	69.12	99.00	2,859.13
Sheriff—serving papers, etc.	53.43	362.85	1,263.17
Coroner—holding inquests, etc.	none	138.25	323.50
County Commissioners' Clerk	none	1,233.44	2,590.63
County attorney and law expenses	none	320.72	231.53
Printing	none	9.25	73.00
Commission to Treasurer, Collector....	none	672.01	1,065.31
Interest on Bonds	none	none	none
Total expenditures	\$425.97	\$15,064.50	\$22,898.80
Total Receipts	357.78	8,106.11	17,769.42

The officials who prepared the table said, as reported by the newspaper, that a total of \$7,525 in additional "court and road" expenses accrued between 1831 and 1849, but because a fire destroyed some of the records and because other records had been inadequately kept, the years in which the expenditures were made could not be ascertained.

That there had been some bonded indebtedness during this period is evident from the further explanation of the officials that \$7,309 in interest on bonds had been paid during this period, but that they, for the aforementioned reasons, were unable to break it down by years.

They also declared that altho the county's indebtedness over this 19-year-period totaled \$25,000, that if \$19,207.55 in delinquent taxes were collected, and if the courts would turn over to the county \$7,500 in fees that had been collected, the county would be out of debt, with \$1,707 to spare.

No further record is found showing what happened in this financial picture, but the officials appear to have been over-optimistic in leaving the impression that all taxes are collectible. They never are.

Because we mentioned earlier in this chapter that the Chicago American, the first daily newspaper in Illinois, attempted in 1839 to give Chicago the nickname of Queen City, let us here recount the facts relating to other nicknames given the city at later dates.

According to a manuscript by Charles M. McIlvaine, librarian at the Chicago Historical Society from 1901 to 1926, the trustees of the village of Chicago, in 1835, adopted the motto, *Urbs in Horto*, or *City In a Garden*.

After this Chicago became known as the Garden City, a nickname that evidently carried a degree of popularity because as recently as 1959 there still were 31 active business firms in Chicago and Cook county using the words Garden City as a part of their names.

It was not until 1890, however, that the most common nickname, Windy City, came into wide usage. The appellation was meant to bear no relation to Chicago's weather conditions. It was used in uncomplimentary fashion by a jealous New Yorker, the famed editor of the New York Sun, Charles A. Dana.

It came about after a number of influential Chicago boosters appeared before Congress seeking legislation to have the proposed World's Columbian Exposition (Chicago World's Fair of 1893) made an official project of the United States government.

New York, Washington, D. C., and St. Louis likewise sought the fair, but because the Chicagoans were talking so convincingly, Dana advised his readers to pay no attention to the "nonsensical claims of that windy city," and added that "Its people could not build a World's Fair even if they won it."

But Chicago did win. President Benjamin Harrison signed the act on April 25, 1890. That was how Chicago came by its first glorious world's fair, and also how the "windy city" misnomer became more firmly latched onto the city.

We have avoided making the assertion that Dana created the "windy city" term. In fact, Volume 4 of *A Dictionary of American English*, University of Chicago Press, states that on Jan. 31, 1887, the Louisville Courier-Journal headlined a news dispatch from Chicago as follows: "A Gauzy Story of an Alleged Anarchist Dynamite Plot from the Windy City."

This Louisville angle came to our attention thru mention of it in a Chicago Tribune editorial of June 16, 1959, written by Carl Wiegman.

So if Dana did not actually coin the term, his vitriolic use of it helped publicize the nickname to the point where it stuck. Some Chicagoans today cherish the appellation, others resent it because the velocity of Chicago's breezes is not abnormal, but most residents appear to have no pronounced feelings on the matter.

* * *

"Best Game Ever Played"

Without attempting in this volume to explore the rich lore of Chicago and Cook county sports, nevertheless in our perusal of old newspaper files in the archives of the Chicago Historical Society, we found many an item concerning sports that relieved somewhat the tediousness of our research. For example, the recount of an 1870 baseball game which, according to the article, "was by far the best ever played in Chicago."

Not only does the account give us a partial insight of the social life of the times, but it reflects the style of sports writing common in those days.

The game apparently was a spring exhibition affair. The first four paragraphs of the account, as published in the old Chicago Times of April 24, 1870, follow, misspellings and all:

"The announcement that the Chicago Base-Ball club would contest a game with the Garden City nine was enough to congregate a crowd of 2,000 at the corner of Taylor and May streets on yesterday afternoon. The arrangements for keeping

the spectators back from the field were admirable, a detachment of police, including Officers Kloss, Kreiburg, and Halter, under the charge of Sergt. Garrity, preserving the best of order, and giving the players every opportunity of conducting their game.

"The Chicago nine went to the bat, and opened the music with 14 runs before going out, their opponents appearing to be at first a trifle nervous at being faced by a lot of professionals. The Garden Citys scored a cipher, and gave way again to the experts, who were enabled to obtain but three in the second innings. From this point to the end of the fifth innings the Garden City nine was unable to obtain a run, the sharp fielding of the Chicago club sending them out with a blank score on each fresh trial. . . .

"Their competitors had succeeded in all but one of the previous innings in keeping the score of the Chicago club down to something like respectable figures. The seventh innings added another unit to the side of the non-professionals, but in the eighth and ninth they were obliged to content themselves with whitewashes, and retired from the field, beaten by a score of 48 to two.

"The figures given are in reality but a poor criterion of the game, which was by far the best ever played in Chicago."

Further down the sports column we learn that another baseball game also was played in Chicago that same day. In this game the Shoo Fly club, composed of Negroes, lost to a "club of white juniors" 29 to 20.

Concerning this game the paper remarks merely that "The members of the first nine are full-grown Fifteenth Amendments, and play a very fine game, although a certain inherent tenderness of the shin-bone of course operates against them not a little when they attempt to stop unusually hot 'daisy cutters.'"

CHAPTER 6

EVOLUTIONARY CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT

IN the evolution of the Cook county form of government, we already have noted that at the outset, when the county was created on Jan. 15, 1831, the commission form was established and three commissioners were elected from at large. (Two of the successful candidates resided in the Chicago settlement, and the third, in the vicinity of the DuPage river, then encompassed by Cook county.) A sheriff and coroner were the only other county officials elected at the time.

That Cook county started with a board of commissioners, rather than a board of township supervisors, was due to the original state constitution of 1818 which provided that all counties be run by a board of three commissioners.

This provision in the constitution had been dictated by the early settlers in the southern portion of the state, most of whom had infiltrated into the Illinois territory from Kentucky, Tennessee, and other southern states where the commission form was popular. Under this form, counties were organized with no provisions for townships.

Cook county's population swelled during the 1830s and

1840s, however, with settlers from the New England states where the township form of government was in fashion. (With the completion of the Erie canal in 1825, the New Englanders, or "blue-bellied Yankees," as southern Illinoisians derisively termed them, began swarming into the northern counties of Illinois and other north-central areas by traveling the Great Lakes water route.)

It was inevitable, therefore, that these Yankees would set up a clamor for the type of local government with which they were familiar. Accordingly, in 1848 they succeeded in amending the state constitution to provide that any county could switch to a township form of government, if it so desired, by popular election.

Change Is Made

Cook county took advantage of this constitutional revision by voting at the November, 1849 election to make the switch. Under the election provisions, the three-man board of county commissioners was thereby dissolved and the managing of county affairs was entrusted to the county judge until such time as the township form could be set up and supervisors elected.

Elections were held on April 2, 1850, in which each existing township chose for itself a group of town officials, including a supervisor who automatically became a member of the county board of supervisors.

The township supervisors, in their first meeting shortly thereafter, chose from their numbers Stephen M. Salisbury of Wheeling township as chairman of the county board.

The exact number of townships that chose supervisors in this first election is not clear, tho it appears to have been 27, including three from Chicago.

The April 4, 1850 issue of the Chicago Daily Democrat, a copy of which now is in the files of the Chicago Historical Society, lists the elected city township supervisors and their

votes as follows:

North Chicago	George W. Dole.....	495
South Chicago.....	N. H. Bolles	593
West Chicago.....	H. Smith	455

No mention is made in this paper of the results in the country township elections. One notes, however, that in the 1850 federal census table there were 27 townships in Cook county as follows:

Twp.	Pop.	Twp.	Pop.
Barrington	676	Lyons	965
Bloom	785	Maine	548
Bremen	250	New Trier	473
Chicago		Niles	408
(nine wards)	27,036	Northfield	1,013
South Chicago	1,008	Orland	504
East & West Chicago	1,919	Palatine	617
Elk Grove	672	Palos	336
Hanover	672	Proviso	482
(same as for		Rich	168
Elk Grove)		Ridgeville ¹	444
Jefferson	744	Schaumburg	489
Lake	349	Thornton	368
Lemont	210	Wheeling	903
Leyden	756	Worth	589

If one assumes from the foregoing table that the townships of "Chicago (nine wards)," "South Chicago," and "East & West Chicago" are the same as the newspaper's North, South, and West Chicago, this means that there were 24 townships in Cook county outside the city of Chicago in 1850.

1. Ridgeville township was organized April 1, 1850, embracing what was afterwards Lake View township. The name was changed to Evanston township Feb. 17, 1857, and at the same time the southern portion was detached and formed into the township of Lake View.—History of Evanston, Hury & Sheppard.

The townships of Cook county were established in a series of federal government surveys, the first of which was made in 1821, preparatory to the construction of the Illinois & Michigan canal.

Federal census tables show that by 1840 the county had 14 townships, including those within Chicago; by 1845, 16 townships; by 1850, the afore-mentioned 27 townships; by 1860, 29 townships; by 1870, 31 townships; and a year later (1871), 33 townships.

Cook county now has 38 townships, of which 30 are the so-called country townships, and eight are within the city of Chicago. They are:

Country Townships

Barrington	Northfield
Berwyn	Norwood Park
Bloom	Oak Park
Bremen	Orland
Calumet	Palatine
Cicero	Palos
Elk Grove	Proviso
Evanston	Rich
Hanover	River Forest
Lemont	Riverside
Leyden	Schaumburg
Lyons	Stickney
Maine	Thornton
New Trier	Wheeling
Niles	Worth

Chicago City Townships

North Chicago	Lake
South Chicago	Lake View
West Chicago	Jefferson
Hyde Park	Rogers Park

17 Counties Retain Commission

There are 102 counties in the state, seventeen of which have chosen to remain under the original commission form of government. Under this non-township form, as previously alluded to, three county commissioners are elected at large for overlapping terms of three years.

In most of these counties such boards also function as boards of tax review and as boards of health.

According to the Illinois Blue Book for 1951-1952, published by the secretary of state, other officers commonly found within the strict commission form of county organization are: county clerk, recorder, county judge, probate judge, sheriff (who also serves as ex-officio county collector), coroner, state's attorney, treasurer (who serves as assessor in counties with populations under 150,000), superintendent of schools, superintendent of highways, surveyor, probation officers, public administrator, and county welfare superintendent.

The remaining 84 counties of the state, exclusive of Cook, are under township organization, the main governing body of which is the county board of supervisors, one supervisor being elected from each township. Each such township also has its complete set of local officers, including assessor, who, tho theoretically under the supervision of the country treasurer, often makes his assessments quite independently.

Under 1949 legislative statutes most counties were due to have a supervisor of assessments especially selected by the county boards of supervisors, but the act subsequently was declared unconstitutional by the state supreme court because such assessors were to be selected rather than chosen by popular election.

Leading proponent of the bill was John S. Clark, elected assessor of Cook county from 1934 to 1954. Clark originally sought legislation to have elected assessors for the other counties of the state, but eventually was forced into compromise for a

selected supervisor of assessments.

The argument for the single assessor or supervisor of assessments was that under him assessments within a county and even between counties would be made in more uniform fashion than if made hodgepodge by the hundreds of individual township assessors. (The writer of this history, Growth of Cook County, was a research analyst under Clark at the time and assisted in seeking this single assessor legislation.)

The afore-mentioned Blue Book also points out that in addition to the elected township supervisors, these township-governed counties operate under a provision of law which entitles them to additional members of their board of supervisors if the county's population exceeds 4,000, as most counties do. These additional supervisors are elected at large, and their numbers sometimes swell the membership on the board to as many as 75, an unwieldy body.

Tho the township form of government had come into being for Cook county in 1850, it soon became obvious that because of the enormous population growth of the city of Chicago, itself, the city's voice in county governmental affairs was fast becoming inadequate.

In 1850, it will be remembered, the entire county had a population of but 43,385, of whom 29,963 lived in Chicago. But by 1870, the county's population had increased to 349,966, of whom 298,977 resided in the city.

Thus if Chicago, with a population six times greater than that of the remainder of the county, were to be proportionately represented, it either would have to elect more than one hundred supervisors from within its limits to offset the nearly thirty country township supervisors, or it would have to reorganize its county governing structure.

Outgrows Town Meeting

Cook county, as of that time, obviously had outgrown the New England "town meeting" form of government. More-

over, because of this population growth—matched in importance only by the community's leadership in trade, transportation, and manufacturing enterprises—Cook county no longer was comparable to any of the other 101 counties of the state.

To give a clearer picture of Cook county's size, both by area and population, we here note that its land area of 956 square miles gives it sixth rank among the 102 counties of Illinois. McLean, of which Bloomington is the seat, ranks first with 1,173 square miles. Putnam, from which Cook was carved in 1831, and of which Hennepin is the seat, is the smallest, both in area (166 square miles) and in population (4,746).

Cook county's population of 4,508,792 (1950 census), however, was not only the largest for any county within the state, but was greater by 303,408 than the population of all other 101 counties combined. The population for the entire state in 1950 was 8,712,176.

In 1959, according to John J. Crane and Edward J. Kenealy, tax rate experts in the office of County Clerk Edward J. Barrett, Cook county had within its boundaries 116 incorporated villages and cities of which four rank among the ten most populous within the state. These four, with their 1950 population census figures, are: Chicago, 3,620,692; Evanston, 73,641; Cicero, 67,544; and Oak Park, 63,529.

Thus with a population that was ever growing, Cook county in 1870 elected a change that was to place its government in a separate category from that of any other county in the state.

It may be only co-incidental that in the months preceding the change, the county government was in something of a turmoil.

This condition is reflected in notes on board proceedings that are reported by Goodspeed and Healy in their *History of Cook County*, published in 1909.

Roll-calls in the late 1860s indicate there were 50 supervisors on the board, of whom slightly fewer than half—elected

on a ward basis—were from the city of Chicago.

The country township supervisors were fighting against the city supervisors, there was evidence of graft on the board, and the county was unable to borrow money to pay current debts until the graft was rooted out.

The fight between the two groups of supervisors reached the stage where one of the city members introduced a resolution to have the forthcoming 1870 constitutional convention insert a clause by which most of the country townships would be expelled from Cook county and attached to adjoining counties.

This resolution proposed the creation of "Chicago County," to be comprised of the townships of North Chicago, South Chicago, West Chicago, Hyde Park, Calumet, Thornton, Lake, Cicero, Jefferson, Lake View, and Evanston. It also provided that the townships of Lemont, Palos, Worth, Orland, Bremen, Rich and Bloom be attached to Will county, and that Proviso, Leyden, Niles, Maine, Elk Grove, and New Trier be given to DuPage county.

This resolution, which would have done away with Cook county, was defeated by the country township majority of supervisors.

In its stead, the supervisors, on Dec. 15, 1869, did adopt an innocuous resolution "that the board of supervisors of Cook county respectfully ask the Constitutional Convention to insert a clause in the Constitution, authorizing the Legislature to divide the counties in certain cases."

This resolution, of course, had no ultimate effect, other than to indicate to the state at large that Cook county was not entirely satisfied with its existing form of township government.

At about the same time there were widespread rumors that both the County hospital and the Oak Forest Infirmary (then strictly a poor house as compared with its present status of

being a hospital) were being mismanaged and that foods served in Oak Forest were inferior to those for which the county was spending money.

A committee of the board, itself, was appointed to "investigate" the charges. This committee subsequently reported back that everything was "satisfactory," but the newspapers termed the report a "whitewash."

Then followed a charge of graft that rocked the county.

Involved was J. J. Kearney, supervisor from Chicago's then ninth ward, who on Dec. 6, 1869, had been elected chairman of the board by his fellow supervisors. Kearney, at the time, was not new on the board, having been a member during the preceding term. How the supervisors from the country townships, who constituted the board's majority, permitted Kearney to gain the chairmanship is not clear.

The graft charge stemmed from circumstances surrounding the county's purchase of land in Englewood that was used as the site of the County Normal School, built within months following the acquisition. A special committee was appointed by the board to investigate.

In March (1870) the committee reported it had secured evidence that at least one member of the board had received a tract of land as a bribe for the purchase of the school site. With that, one of the supervisors presented to the board the following resolution:

"Whereas, the special committee of five appointed by this board to examine into and investigate certain charges, report that they found J. J. Kearney, a member of this board, did receive a lot of land, and from the preponderance of testimony it was for his influence in securing the location of the Cook County Normal school at Englewood while he was a member of the previous board of supervisors;

"Therefore, be it resolved as the sense of this board, that the said J. J. Kearney, supervisor of the Ninth ward and

member of this board, be requested to resign as presiding officer and as a member of this board."

Two motions followed. One, asking Kearney to resign as chairman, carried 42 to eight. Action on the other, asking him to resign as a member of the board, was postponed by a vote of 29 to 21.

On March 22, 1870, Kearney resigned as board chairman, but not as a board member.

Shortly, thereafter, tho the date is not clearly established, a committee of the board, investigating the letting of contracts for public buildings, reported that "in view of the responsibility resting on them and to the end that this board may be purged of shame and disgrace now existing upon it, they would recommend that J. J. Kearney, supervisor for the Ninth ward, be expelled from this board and his name be erased from the roll."

When this was placed in the form of a motion, it carried by a vote of 42 to 4 and Supervisor Kearney, the former president, was off the board and out of office.

Hybrid Government For Cook

The ensuing constitutional revision of 1870 made it possible for Cook county to do away with its strict township form of government the following year, substituting for it a form unlike any other in the state. This embodies certain features of both the township and commission forms of organization, and has been found so satisfactory that only minor changes in it have been made down to the present time.

The new government retained in name the townships and permitted those in the county outside of Chicago to elect a complete set of officers, but drastically curtailed their powers in most cases.

As explained recently by George R. McCollom, chief clerk in the election department of the county clerk's office, the township officers, after the change, continued to be supervisor,

clerk, justice of the peace, and treasurer and collector, the latter two offices often being held by the same person.

The township supervisor, however, ceased representing his township on the county board, and the collector and assessor became, in effect, deputies of the county treasurer (collector) and the county assessor, respectively.

As mentioned previously, Cook county has 30 such so-called "country" townships and eight city townships within Chicago, but the city's townships elect no officials and exercise no governmental authority.

The major alteration effected in this change of government for Cook county was the supplanting of its board of supervisors (one from each township or city) with a board of commissioners numbering 15, ten of whom were elected from within the city of Chicago, and five from the remainder of the county.

In the early years under the new form of organization, the ten Chicago commissioners were elected from groups of wards within the city, while the remaining five members were elected from groups of townships within the county outside the city. Later, however, this was changed so that the commissioners were and still are elected from at large, the ten from within Chicago, and the five from outside.

The first meeting of the new board of commissioners of Cook county was held on Dec. 4, 1871. At this meeting, Commissioner Julius White was elected by his fellow members as county board chairman (later termed president).



Daniel Ryan
*President, Board of
Commissioners of Cook County*

That White was one of the five commissioners from outside Chicago, representing the "country" townships of Lake View,¹ New Trier, Northfield, and Niles, indicates he had support from Chicago commissioners and that the previous feuds between city and country township representatives were at an end.

The term of office for a commissioner, originally set for three years, on a staggered basis, now has been extended to four, with the commissioners now being elected in even-numbered, non-presidential years, and all at the same time.

Electing A President

And now, instead of letting the commissioners choose their own chairman, as at first, the voters elect one as board president. The president also must be elected separately as a board member. To date there has been no embarrassing circumstance wherein a person might be elected board president but would be unable to serve because he failed to get elected as a board member.

The president, tho serving both as a commissioner and as president, has but one vote and receives but a single salary. A candidate for board president runs on a county-wide basis, receiving votes from within Chicago as well as from without.

In these elections the board members and the president also become, automatically, ex-officio members and president of the Cook county board of forest preserve commissioners, and as such serve without additional pay.

The salary of the president of the county board now is \$15,000 a year, and that of each of the other 14 commissioners, \$10,000. Full time of the commissioners now is required in administering the many functions of present-day county government.

Back in the 1830s and 1840s, when Cook county had but

1. Lake View township was not annexed to the city of Chicago until 1889.

three commissioners and national economy was on a scale uncomparable to that of today, the salary of a board member was \$1.50 per day, and that only for days on which the board met. Records are replete with resignations of early-day commissioners before their terms expired.

As members of the present-day county board, the commissioners are appointed by the president, with board concurrence, to serve on various administrative committees. The standing committees are those on finance, public service, roads and bridges, building, legislation, civil service, rules, tax delinquency, and zoning.

The work of the public service committee is so voluminous, however, that here the commissioners divide themselves into smaller sub-committees to deal with separate phases. These sub-committees, the names of which are in some cases descriptive, follow:

County hospital, Oak Forest hospital, department of welfare, county jail and criminal court, court house, Cook County School of Nursing, judiciary and city relations, family court and Arthur J. Audy Home for Children (Juvenile Detention), education, stationery and printing, and license.

In addition, the commissioners serve on many special committees that function on matters not specifically related to duties of regular committees.

Functions Of County Board

The functions of the Cook county board are various, many and far-reaching. The most important, grouped under broad classifications rather than by individual departments, probably are as follows:

The giving of care, both medical and otherwise, for those of the county's nearly five million residents who are financially unable to provide for themselves.

The construction and maintenance of roads and expressways adequate to accommodate the ever-increasing traffic within

such a great metropolitan area.

The provision and maintenance of buildings necessary to house both the charitable institutions and the many public offices and departments engaged in the administration of county government.

Acting as the fiscal agent that raises money, thru the levying of taxes or otherwise, and directly or indirectly supervising expenditures for all branches of county government.

The collecting of delinquent real estate taxes thru certain foreclosure proceedings.

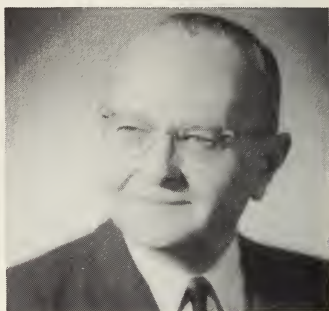
Establishing and supervising the enforcement of regulations pertaining to such public matters as health, rabies control, and building and zoning.

When sitting as the forest preserve board, the commissioners' added duty of establishing and maintaining nearly 50,000 acres of forest preserve recreation lands that surround Chicago is no small chore.

The president of the county board since 1934 has been the ex-officio liquor control commissioner of Cook county, issuing (sometimes revoking) licenses for the operation of taverns, roadhouses, and package liquor stores in the unincorporated areas. As of 1959 there were some 325 such licenses in effect. (The president's actions as liquor control commissioner do not require county board approval.)

Nor does the county board ever know when its functions are to be increased. One of the last such added duties developed as an outgrowth of the rabies scare of 1953.

With an unusual number of cases of the dread disease break-



Lee J. Howard, first and only auditor Cook county ever had. When appointed March 1, 1923, his staff consisted of one assistant and a secretary. In 1959 it numbered 170. Thruout the years, changing administrations have leaned heavily upon Howard for wise and friendly counsel in all matters affecting Cook county.

ing out among dogs thruout the state, endangering all citizenry, the state legislature on July 6, 1953, enacted a rabies control law, administered by the state department of agriculture, specifying that county boards should establish departments, appoint inspectors, and otherwise take all measures necessary to eradicate the menace.



Traffic safety was a recognized problem a half-century ago, even as it is today. Appearing in a 1912 public report issued by Peter M. Hoffman, then coroner of Cook county, were these illustrations showing how accidents can happen. Styles of vehicles change, but basic safety principles remain much the same.

On the following Feb. 10 (1954) the board created the Cook county rabies control division and appointed as its head Dr. Edward C. Khuen, a veterinary, and named all licensed veterinarians within the county as deputy inspectors.

The new department, fortunately, has proved no added expense to the taxpayers. Fees charged for compulsory vaccination of dogs thruout the city and county has more than offset departmental costs.



Graphic poster used by Coroner Peter M. Hoffman in 1912 tells its own story.

The powers of the county board are broad. As pointed out by A. L. Hornick, assistant to the board president and, himself, a lawyer and authority on government, the state constitution specifically says:

"The county affairs of Cook county shall be managed by a board of commissioners . . . in such manner as may be provided by law."

The board, normally, does not direct the policies or functions of the other elected officials of Cook county, other than by appropriating tax funds for the operation of these offices and providing them with office space and sufficient help.

Such independent county officials who are elected by the people of Cook county are:

Treasurer, recorder, assessor, state's attorney, sheriff, coroner, members of the board of (tax) appeals, county clerk, clerk of the Superior court, clerk of the Circuit court, clerk of the Criminal court, clerk of the Probate court, judge of the Probate court, superintendent of county schools, 20 Circuit



President Daniel Ryan of the Cook county board (right) and Commissioner William N. Erickson hold raccoons for picture-taking at Sept. 7, 1958 opening of Aux Plaines River Trail Nature Center in county forest preserves three miles north of village of DesPlaines. President Ryan's grandchildren join in fun. Moments later the "tame" raccoon held by Ryan bit the president on thumb.

court judges, and 36 Superior court judges.

(Of these elected judges, six from the Superior court and three from the Circuit court are assigned by the Illinois Supreme court justices to sit in the Illinois Appellate court. Their salaries are borne jointly by Cook county and the state.)

Must Report To County Board

The "independence" of these elected office holders, however, is limited in that they must make full reports at regular intervals to the county board on both financial expenditures and other activities of their offices.

This means that the board, as fiscal agent, has jurisdiction over all offices in cases of suspected malfeasance or even ineptness on the part of the office holders.

Legal adviser to the board is the state's attorney—currently

Benjamin S. Adamowski. His chief of the civil branch who attends all board meetings is Elroy C. Sandquist. (Adamowski was elected in 1956, defeating incumbent John Gutknecht. Under Gutknecht the civil branch chief had been Gordon B. Nash.)

Thus while Cook county has set its government apart from the other two types found in the remaining 101 counties of the state, the county's difference from the others is recognized by the state legislature in still another way.

For the regulation of official fees and salaries, and for other legislative matters, the legislature has divided the counties into three classifications—those of 25,000 population or under, those with populations between 25,000 and 500,000, and those with populations over 500,000. There are 56 counties in the first classification, 45 in the second, and one—Cook—in the third.

\$147,000,000 Back Taxes Collected

Altho we here may be breaking the continuity of text, the work of the county board's tax delinquency committee, referred to previously, is so outstanding that we hasten to give it space before it becomes lost in our file of notes.

On May 8, 1959, as public relations director for the county, we wrote the following news release which, tho not of spicy

Charles G. Sauers (left), general superintendent of Cook County Forest Preserve District since 1929, receives 25-year service button late in 1954 from Daniel Ryan, president of both the county board and the forest preserve board. In center is late Edward Eagle Brown, noted Chicago banker and member of the citizens advisory committee of the forest preserve district from 1927 until his death Aug. 24, 1959. Brown had been committee chairman since 1937.





Current (1959) members of Cook county board's tax committee that collected \$147,000,000 in delinquent real estate taxes and returned 516,000 properties to active tax-paying rolls since 1942. Top row, left to right, Commissioners Frank Bobrytzke, chairman, and John J. Duffy, vice chairman. Middle row: Commissioners John Mackler, Jr. and Jerry Dolezal. Bottom row, left: Commissioner Edward M. Sneed. William G. Donne, lower right, county board secretary and tax committee clerk, prepared all tax cases upon which committee acted. As a commissioner, Daniel Ryan, pictured elsewhere, was chairman from time of tax committee's creation May 1, 1942 until Dec. 1, 1954, when he became board president.

nature, was widely used in newspapers and mentioned on radio and TV newscasts:

The tax delinquency committee of the county board has collected \$147,148,820 in delinquent taxes since its creation in 1942, has placed 516,000 tax-delinquent parcels of real estate back on the active tax-paying rolls, and expects to complete its task within the next two years.

That was the word given out today by Commissioner Frank Bobrytzke, committee chairman, in submitting a committee report to Daniel Ryan, county board president.

Bobrytzke said:

"We have only about 84,500 delinquent parcels remaining in Cook county, and with some 20,000 of them being of the small, odd-shaped 'sliver' variety that never will be usable, this means we have only about 64,500 to go. We should have them cleaned up within the next two years.

"Real estate tax collections have risen from some 70 per cent when our committee started, to approximately 99 per cent now. We naturally feel proud of our accomplishments and shall be glad when our work is ended."

The committee, with the cooperation of the state's attorney, instigates voluntary tax foreclosure proceedings under which the owner of a property upon which tax delinquencies and penalties exceed its value, agrees to bid a stipulated amount at a tax foreclosure sale to settle the delinquency.

Once the amount is agreed upon, the committee turns the matter over to the state's attorney who files proceedings in either Circuit or Superior court. The court orders the property to public auction. In some cases the owners are outbid by others, which is an advantage to the county.

The owner of a tax delinquent vacant property may settle for as low as 40 per cent of the principal amount of his taxes for 1946 and prior years. The penalties for those years, sometimes amounting to more than the taxes, also will be wiped out.

In order to effect such a settlement, however, the owner must pay all of the outstanding taxes, plus full penalties of one per cent a month, for 1947 and all succeeding years.

Most of the delinquencies extend back into the 1920's, altho a few cases date back to before the turn of the century, according to William G. Donne, county board secretary who has much to do with preparation of the proceedings.

About two-thirds of the delinquencies are in the rural areas of Cook county, but with so many subdivisions springing up, there now is more incentive for settling the taxes and making the lots available for building purposes, Donne further declared.

Settlement of such vacants now is averaging 45.5 per cent of the principal taxes for 1946 and prior years. Very few delinquencies remain on improved properties, but where they do exist, the owner must settle for a full 100 per cent of the principal taxes if he undergoes settlement. His only advantage here is getting the county to wipe out the penalties prior to 1947.

The committee, in meeting today, approved the starting of voluntary proceedings against about 3,500 properties. At its last meeting, March 13, it started proceedings against 3,963 properties, of which only 62 were improved. That action resulted in the collection of \$1,819,309, Bobrytzke's report to Ryan pointed out.

Members of the committee, in addition to Chairman Bobrytzke, are: Commissioners John J. Duffy, Jerry Dolezal, John Mackler, Jr., and Edward M. Sneed.

CHAPTER 7

COOK COUNTY'S COURTHOUSES

COOK COUNTY, in the year 1960, was still in need of a new courthouse, having long-since outgrown its present quarters. In fact, there seldom had been a period in the county's history when its courthouses were adequate, even when new.

Principal reason was that few courthouse designers and builders, including public officials, have anticipated the enormousness of population growths. Or if they did, they feared to submit to public referendum a request for the extra millions of dollars needed to erect a structure that would be adequate for a period of even 50 or 75 years; the public might defeat such a large bond issue and might even hold resentment against public officials who dared ask for the necessary amounts.

Construction of the present county courthouse—often referred to as the county building—was begun in 1906 and completed in 1907. The structure cost but \$3,284,000, considered a low figure even in those days of low prices. Limited alterations since then have increased this figure to some extent.

The builders said the courthouse would adequately accom-

moderate the business of a population of 4,000,000 county residents, or nearly double the population of that time. When, some of them asked, would Cook county's population ever reach four million?

Many of the builders, however, lived to see the four-million figure reached only 25 years later. The 1930 federal census showed Cook county to have 3,982,125 residents.

But even prior to 1930—so early as 1924, in fact—the county was renting space in nearby buildings. Acquaintances¹ of the late William Busse of Mount Prospect, a county commissioner from 1900 to 1954, with the exception of a two-year period from 1912 to 1914, quote him as having remarked upon several occasions:

"The county building was never large enough for the county's needs from the day we moved into it."

The 1958 county budget appropriations for outside rentals and alterations to rented offices totaled \$992,988, including welfare department rentals of \$380,900. (The county is reimbursed by the state for a major portion of the welfare rentals, but the entire rent bill still is borne by the taxpayers.)

By 1950 Cook county's population had zoomed to 4,508,792, and some estimates for 1960 were 5,325,000.² Because population growths cannot be determined accurately by projecting past yearly averages into the future, the population of Cook county by the end of this century might reach almost anyone's guess.

Cook county has had four courthouses altogether, not counting the "powder room" or magazine of Fort Dearborn and private dwellings in which county business was conducted

1. Recalled by Charles J. Mayr, long-time administrative assistant to the Director of Public Welfare of Cook county.

2. Clyde F. Kohn, chairman, Center for Metropolitan Studies, Department of Geography, Northwestern University, in 1956 estimated Cook county's 1960 population, exclusive of Chicago, at 1,450,000 while 1960 estimates for Chicago, made by various persons, average 3,875,000.



First Cook county courthouse, erected in 1835, with stockade jail at rear. Not shown in wood engraving is county's first almshouse, built in 1832, which also shared space within the public square. The almshouse promptly became, in effect, County hospital, No. 1.



Second courthouse, completed in 1853, shown after it was remodeled in 1858.



Same courthouse, greatly enlarged and remodeled, as it appeared in 1871, prior to its destruction by Chicago fire. It also housed city hall offices.

during the first four years after the county was created by an act of the Illinois legislature on Jan. 15, 1831. From time to time, however, these courthouses were remodeled and enlarged to such an extent that they constituted virtually new structures.

In the "programme" of ceremonies upon the laying of the corner stone for the present courthouse on Sept. 21, 1906 there appears a description of these courthouses, together with other accounts relative to their construction.

Beginning with Courthouse No. 1, erected in 1835 on the same site as today's courthouse, which site was part of a government grant, the program says:

It was small, but not unsightly, with a pillared portico. In 1851 the corner stone of the second building was laid and this rather pretentious structure was completed in 1853. Five years later it was remodeled, and there, on May 1 and 2, 1865, the hallowed remains of Abraham Lincoln lay in state while thousands passed the bier.

Again extensive alterations were made in 1870,¹ and in October,

1. Articles found repeatedly in the 1870 issues of the old Chicago Times and other newspapers state that the roof over the east wing collapsed due to faulty construction. Investigations followed in which it was discovered that the roof and other portions of the building had been constructed without blue prints or architectural plans.



Combined courthouse and city hall, completed in 1882. An explosion and fire in 1905 rendered it unfit for further occupation.

1871, the courthouse was reduced to a heap of ruins by the conflagration that swept over the city.

One year after the great fire the county and city authorities agreed to erect a courthouse and a city hall identical so far as the exterior was concerned, but it was not until July 4, 1877, that the corner stone of the county building was laid.

Buildings Never Large Enough

Some five years later the structure was completed and occupied, but from the first it proved so unsuited and inadequate to the demands of the county's business that large sums were expended annually for the rental of additional quarters. In January, 1905, an explosion and fire rendered the gloomy pile of masonry practically unfit for further occupation.

The county board faced the dilemma of expending thousands of dollars for repairing a building that was insufficient in size, and, even before the fire, dangerous to occupants and passers-by, or of erecting a new structure.

At the suggestion of President Edward J. Brundage, the board proceeded to the consideration of the problem, and on January 23 (1905) a resolution was adopted providing for a commission of ten, to be composed of members of the county board, other county officials and residents of the county not in the public service, to consider the

entire question of need of a new courthouse, and to confer with a similar commission, to be appointed by the city, as to a uniform city and county building.

"President Brundage appointed as members of this commission John G. Shedd, Graeme Stewart, Harry G. Selfridge, Walter H. Wilson, Judge Axel Chytraus; County Commissioners Edwin K. Walker, Louis H. Mack and William C. Hartray; Superintendent of Public Service William McLaren and County Architect Harris W. Huehl.

"The commission proceeded to its work immediately. With the assistance of engineers and architects it made a careful inspection of the county building and inquired into its facilities for handling the business of the county. In February the commission made its report, saying:

"The need of a new courthouse is so imperative that a long delay is absolutely out of the question," and recommending that there be submitted to the people a proposition to issue bonds to provide for the erection and equipment of a suitable courthouse.

To the late Graeme Stewart, who died while in the midst of the courthouse activities, more than to any other one citizen, is due the



Thousands attend corner-stone laying for present courthouse Sept. 21, 1906. Charles W. Fairbanks, vice president of the United States, is speaking.



"Half a loaf is better than no loaf," said Chicagoans in 1908, a year after the new Cook county courthouse (shown on right) had been completed, and a year before the old city hall half of building (left) had been torn down to make way for new city hall of matching architecture.

Traffic regulations, if any, apparently were not enforced. Horse-drawn vehicles and early-day automobiles, shown in picture, traveled on any side of street, in any direction, and were parked where their drivers pleased. Detective Jack Muller, Chicago's champion traffic ticket writer of the late 1950s, could have had a field day.

credit for this action. His great influence as a citizen and publicist was actively exercised in the agitation for a new courthouse. He urged immediate abandonment of the old structure and the erection of a building that would be an honor to Cook county.

The county board ordered that the question of issuing \$5,000,000 of county bonds be submitted to the people at a special election April 4 (1905), coincident with the city and town elections. The proposition carried by a majority of nearly 40,000 and before the end of that month quarters for most of the county offices in other buildings had been obtained. The contract for wrecking the old building was let August 16, and the work of tearing it down was begun October 1.

Architects were invited to enter an open competition for plans for the new courthouse, and thirteen sets were submitted anonymously. These were passed upon by a jury consisting of John G. Shedd, Prof. William R. Ware, of Boston, David B. Jones, William McLaren and John M. Ewen.



Combined county building (courthouse) and city hall, as seen from Washington and Clark streets, 1959.



County board's assembly room in new courthouse, December, 1907. Board is in session, with President William Busse presiding. Except for light fixtures and personnel, scene remains unchanged more than a half-century later.

Upon its recommendation, the design submitted by Holabird & Roche was accepted, and that firm was employed as the architects of the building. The services of John M. Ewen were secured as consulting engineer for the county. The entire county board was made a permanent building committee.

The contract for the caisson foundations of the building was awarded December 11, and actual digging began January 18, 1906. The caissons were completed and the foundations turned over to the building contractor on contract date, May 15.

The contract for the construction of the building was let February 15, 1906, the contract price being \$3,284,000. The first steel was put in place June 12, when the basement girders were set. The first granite was set August 28.

Entire Block Owned By County

The county building occupies the entire east half of the block bounded by Clark, Randolph, LaSalle and Washington streets; the city hall, the west half. The entire block of land, however, is the property of Cook county. Under a contract entered into in 1872 the city of Chicago is given the use of the west half so long as it is occupied by a city hall, with the provision that the county building and city hall shall be uniform in general exterior design and appearance.

The courthouse, eleven stories high, rests upon 130 concrete caissons that extend down to the solid rock, 115 feet beneath the surface. It contains 11,000 tons of structural steel, 14,000 tons of granite, and 33,000 tons of concrete.

The building has three basements, the first one being full, and the other two only part full. Under the third basement is the narrow gauge railroad which suspended operations in 1958. (This was a portion of the 62-mile underground rail system formerly used in hauling ashes and debris from large buildings in Chicago's central business district. The county building and city hall were among the beneficiaries of these services.)

At the time of its construction, Cook county's present courthouse reputedly was the largest county building in the United

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

STANDING COMMITTEES

EDUCATION

BUILDING

CIVIL SERVICE

FINANCE

ISLAND

BLIC SERVICE

JOBS & BRIDGES

SUN

MOONS

HOSPITAL

HOSPITAL SCHOOLS

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Twelve of the fifteen members of the County Board, and the committee clerk, pictured following 1914 elections. Seated, left to right: Committee Clerk Peter J. Ellert, Commissioner Daniel Ryan (became president in 1921 and was the father of the Daniel Ryan, who has been president since 1934), President Peter Reinberg, and Commissioners Owen O'Malley and William H. Maclean. Standing, left to right, Commissioners Thomas Kaspecki, George A. Miller, Bartley Burg, Joseph Carolan, Daniel Moriarty, William Busse (once president), Albert Nowak and Frank Ragen. Not in picture were Commissioners Joseph M. Fitzgerald, Dudley D. Pierson and William D. Scott. All except Miller are deceased.

States. It contained 12,000,000 cubic feet of space, 14 acres of floor space, and a mile of corridors. If erected under present-day costs, the county side of the building alone would cost many times the original price, as also would the city hall.

The corner-stone laying, itself, was an elaborate affair, with band music, military parade, and speeches by Charles W. Fairbanks, vice-president of the United States; Charles S. Deneen, governor of Illinois; Edward F. Dunne, mayor of Chicago; and Edward J. Brundage, president of the county board.

Sealed into the corner-stone were the following articles:

Letters of regret for not being present from President Theodore Roosevelt and Chief Justice Fuller.

Chicago directories for 1844 and 1906.

Relief in clay of the first Fort Dearborn, 1803, modeled by Helen L. Bowman.

Stereoscopic views of Chicago in ruins following the 1871 fire
Map of Cook and DuPage counties.

Photographic views of Cook county's courthouses from 1835 to 1906.

Reports of courthouse committees and copies of all contracts for new courthouse.

Proceedings of county board, 1905-1906.

"Advance of Chicago as a Commercial Center to Close of the XIX Century."

Chicago Historical Society's Year Book, 1905-1906.

Chicago Historical Society's Handbook, 1906.

Views of Chicago Historical Society Building.

First dirt excavated from the Drainage Canal.

Copies of Chicago's evening and morning newspapers.

"Chicago in Picture and Poetry," by Horace Spencer Fiske.

Annual message of Mayor Dunne, autographed.

Cook county charity service report, 1905.

Photographs of President Brundage and other members of the county board.

Program of ceremonies for the laying of the corner-stone.

Certificates of membership of Chicago Board of Trade, Illinois Manufacturers' Association, Union League Club, Lincoln Club, Iroquois Club, Hamilton Club, Press Club of Chicago, Merchants' Club, Chicago Commercial Association, Chicago Real Estate Board, Chicago Bar Association, Lawyers' Association of Chicago, Chicago Historical Society, Marquette Club, Standard Club, Industrial Club of Chicago, and others.

Much talking has been done during the past 25 or 30 years on how to relieve the overcrowded conditions in the county building, but aside from the renting of additional space for courts and offices, nothing concrete has come of it.

Consideration has been given to the construction of additional floors atop the combined county building and city hall, but the existing structures would have to be reinforced, including the setting of additional caissons beneath them.

Various privately-owned buildings in the vicinity have been offered for sale to the county.

The county board went so far in 1954, when Commissioner William N. Erickson was president, as to have its architect, the late Raymond F. Houlihan, draft a design for a Cook county administration building that would house county offices exclusive of the courts.



JAMES F. ASHENDEN
County Commissioner

The building proposed by Houlihan would have been 22 stories tall and contained 17.7 acres of floor space, estimated to be sufficient for these specific purposes until 1975.

A suggestion was that the county purchase land and locate such a structure on the west half of the block bounded on the west by Clark street, on the south by Washington street, on the east by Dearborn street, and on the north by Randolph street. It would be directly across the street from

the Clark-street side of the present county building and would be connected with the older structure by passage-ways both beneath and above Clark street.

Since that time there has been much agitation, principally



Pictured are models of proposed new civic center (1959) as seen from Randolph street, with Dearborn street on left, Clark street in center, and LaSalle street on right. Tall building in background is 21-story courts building; in foreground (left) is 21-story office building for county and city hall use. At right is present county building and city hall, with exterior remodeled to conform with new architecture. In center is landscaped plaza, one story below street level.

on the part of various civic interests, to have Cook county join with other governing agencies in erecting a combination governmental center, to be known as the Fort Dearborn Square.

This would cost an estimated \$165,000,000 and would accommodate the county, city, state, and federal offices and courts, altho the present city hall-county building would be retained entirely for the exclusive use of courts.

Such a government square would constitute but a portion of the visionary Fort Dearborn Project, designed to occupy 151 acres on the north side of the Chicago river in the near-north side of the city.

On Aug. 24, 1954, the late Earl Kribben, director of the proposed Fort Dearborn Project, wrote then President Erickson about the matter, saying in part:

"As we presently see it, Cook county has the most acute space need of any local government and is also in a financial position to provide for its needs."

Other civic groups, led by the Chicago Bar association, so late as 1956 were urging the construction of a centrally-located, down-town courthouse, some 30 stories high, that would house the Circuit, Superior, County, Probate, and Criminal courts, as well as such offices as the clerks of the courts, the state's attorney, and the sheriff. This plan carried the endorsement of Richard W. Prendergast, county architect, and Circuit Court Judge Cornelius J. Harrington, then chief justice of the Criminal court.

Latest proposed plan for providing adequate office and courtroom space for county and city governments was announced on June 8, 1959 by the city's public building commission of which Mayor Richard J. Daley is chairman.

This program called for the construction of a 61 million dollar civic center in the square block immediately east of the county building and city hall. This is bounded by Randolph, Washington, Dearborn and Clark streets.



CHRIST A. JENSEN
County Commissioner

Within the area would be constructed two buildings of 21 stories each and a plaza. (See illustration.) One of the buildings, facing on Washington street, and extending all the way from Dearborn to Clark, would contain 145 courtrooms for state and city courts.

The other building would be on the northeast corner of the block and would house county and city government offices. Tho containing the same number of stories, this building would not be

quite as tall as the courts building because courtrooms call for slightly higher ceilings.

First floors of both buildings would be rented out for use of restaurants and shops. Pedestrian tunnels and overhead walks would connect the structures with the present county building which faces on Clark street.

The landscaped plaza, on the northwest portion of the block, would be one story below street level, and would have a garage and truck loading space on a level beneath it.

The present county building and city hall would have their exteriors remodeled to conform with architecture of the new buildings, and their interiors also would be remodeled suitably for office space after the courts will have been moved out. Such remodeling, however, would not be paid by the public building commission and is not figured in the 61 million dollar cost.

The new civic center would be financed by revenue bonds issued by the commission. The bonds would be retired over a 20-year span thru rentals of space to the county and city, plus revenue from the privately-owned concessions and shops.

Net annual cost to the public agencies has been estimated at \$5,897,000, or \$6.85 a year per square foot, during the first 20 years. The private businesses would contribute an estimated \$350,000 yearly in rentals.

The plan, drafted by the city planning department, does not include the Criminal court, located at 26th street and California avenue, altho further study was to be given by the commission to the desirability of bringing these courts to the new center.

The public building commission is a municipal corporation composed of 11 members, including elected officials and civic leaders. Its authority to issue revenue bonds for such purposes was granted by an act of the 1955 state legislature.

Concerning the plans, Daniel Ryan, president of the county

board and a member of the public building commission, said:

"These buildings are a public necessity. They not only will give us the courtrooms we need to help clear up a big backlog of cases awaiting trial, but they also will free the county building of courtrooms, and permit us to use this space for many offices for which we now rent costly outside quarters."

In the meantime, the county board, hard-pressed for space, early in 1956 found it necessary to rent and remodel into ten new courtrooms, space at 69 West Washington street. These were dedicated and placed into use Jan. 30, 1956.

Chicago's City Hall

The corner-stone for the present city hall was laid on July 20, 1909, when Fred A. Busse was mayor. The building was completed within the next 18 months. The city offices, which had been widely scattered about the city during construction, moved into the new edifice during January and February of 1911, dedication ceremonies being held February 27 of that year.

In appearance and for all practical purposes the two buildings are, in effect, but one building, a fact that often confuses individuals who seek a court room or office in one side or the other. Not all floors between the two buildings have cut-thrus. Separate banks of elevators are operated for each building.

Just how far wrong the builders could go in estimating the future adequacy of the city hall is reflected in a May 28, 1910 letter¹ written by the building's architects, the firm of Holabird & Roche, which, it will be remembered, also had designed the county building.

The letter, addressed to F. A. Eastman, then city statistician and municipal librarian, said, in part:

"We are in receipt of your favor of May 25 requesting an estimate of the natural or probable life of the Chicago city

1. Published in Chicago City Manual, 1910, p 12.

hall or the time it is likely to suffice for the city's executive and administrative departments.

"Our estimate of the probable life of the building, from a structural standpoint, is 100 to 150 years.

"From the standpoint of its adequacy for the city executive and administrative departments we would say that it would be fully adequate for 50 to 75 years."

The "adequacy" of the city hall was short-lived. In less than ten years, even prior to 1920, the city was having to rent outside space for the engineering departments of its city council committees on railway terminals and local transportation.

To partially offset its space shortage, however, the city now has purchased additional buildings, including the one at 54 West Hubbard street, occupied by the board of health, and the even larger one at 321 North LaSalle street, now known as the Central Office building.

The large council chamber on the second and third floors of the present city hall—Randolph street side of the building—was gutted by fire on the evening of March 21, 1957. Also damaged were adjoining rooms on these floors.

Restoration, costing a half-million dollars, was completed and the new chambers dedicated on March 4, 1958.* (This date was chosen by Mayor Richard J. Daley to correspond with the March 4, 1837 date on which Chicago was incorporated as a city.)

During this period that the chamber was being restored, the council held its meetings in the cramped quarters of the corporation counsel's office on the fifth floor.

A commentary upon future growth of Chicago and Cook county appeared in the Chicago City Manual of 1910 (pages 14 and 15) in which the following speculation was stated, in part:

"The figures that represent our present population (2,000,000) may be multiplied by three, and yet the result

would not equal the total of souls that reasonably may be expected to be present in 1985.

"It is, therefore, probable that in 75 years from now the whole county will be populated with urbanites? That there will be no suburbs within the county?

"Yes, that is very probable, but still there is room for the hope that, in that coming time, a respectable number of large areas inside the greater city will be exempt from residential settlement.

"Many years before then let all good people hope and pray, some park commission, or some forest preserve association—the universal public interest assisting—will have saved the forest tracts which still magnificently enrich the landscape in Glencoe, and at intervals all down the border of the Des Plaines river, and have dedicated them in perpetuity as pleasure grounds that shall equal or exceed in attractiveness, for multitudes of nature lovers, the elaborately cultivated parks."

The identity of the writer is not clear. The frontispiece states the manual was "prepared" by F. A. Eastman, then statistician and municipal librarian. Working as his assistant was Frederick Rex who later became the librarian and who, himself, has done much writing along these lines.

Regardless of authorship, the prognosticator appears a half-century later to have been surprisingly accurate.

His six-million population figure for all of Cook county by 1985 may be too low, but he was correct in stating that Cook county would be filling rapidly with homes, that it often would be difficult to tell where one suburb leaves off and another begins, and he "nailed squarely on the head" the wonderful Cook County Forest Preserve District.

CHAPTER 8

A CHICAGO FIRE AFTERMATH

WHEN the great fire of Oct. 8 and 9, 1871, roared demon-like across Chicago, consuming 15,000 homes and 2,450 buildings in the central business district of the burgeoning young city, the loss was incalculable.

Loss of life, always the most important factor in any disaster, has been roughly estimated at 250. That was large, of course, but it is a wonder the figure wasn't even greater. Many disasters have taken more lives. The Peshtigo (Wis.) fire the following day (Oct. 9, 1871) claimed 1,152 lives.

One might think that a reasonably accurate figure of the number of dead in the Chicago fire could be ascertained, but there were factors that made this difficult. Altho only 120 bodies were actually recovered, many persons were known to have burned to unrecoverable ashes in the fiery holocaust that melted steel rails and crumbled building stones to dust. Nor could too much be determined by counting the number of missing persons. Some fled the city, never to return and never to make an accounting of themselves.

Determination of the value of destroyed property was equally

difficult. Some have reckoned it as low as 196 million dollars, others as high as 400 million. And remember, back in those pre-inflation days, when a dollar a day was considered a fair wage, any figure in the hundreds of millions was staggering. It still is.

Value of the contents of buildings, in some instances, could be determined with a degree of accuracy, especially if the operator of a grain elevator knew how many bushels of wheat or corn he had stored. Large department stores had fairly reliable inventories. The cost of a new building, such as a theater, a hotel, or church could be had.

The value of many buildings, however, had increased since their construction. Nor were replacement costs much of a guide because most structures, even homes, were rebuilt in more elaborate and sturdier fashion.

Loss of earnings thru business interruption was difficult to determine. Average receipts of the past years before the fire might not be a proper criterion, for with an expanding economy, and with business booming in the lusty young metropolis, profits often grew by leaps and bounds.

But aside from business losses, and losses due to temporary unemployment, let us consider a few of the other losses that affected the individuals of the community.

What is the value of the contents of a home? What are the intangible values of a carefully-kept, family record Bible, of a family heirloom, of a beautiful painting, of a little girl's China doll.

What is the value of the original copy of Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation? (The copy went up in flames, together with all other contents of the Chicago Historical Society building.)

What is the value of a box of records that includes the deed to one's home, and other vital papers?

In answer to the last question, one might say: "Possibly

not too much because the home owner could go to the recorder's office and obtain a certified copy of his recorded deed."

Such a statement, however, would be 100 per cent false in the case of the Chicago fire. The Cook county courthouse went up in flames, and with it went all county records, including those of the recorder's office, the courts, the county clerk, the county board, and the other county offices housed within the building.

All that was saved from the county courthouse were the lives of some 100 prisoners incarcerated in basement cells. At the last possible minute, all prisoners were set free, with the exception of a half-dozen who were charged with murder. These latter were led away in chains so they could take their court chances of eventually meeting the hangman.

It is not our intent here to delve deeply into all details of the fire. They have been told by many, and exceedingly well by our once fellow newspaper reporter, Robert Cromie, in his recent book, *The Great Chicago Fire*.

Toward the end of this chapter, however, we shall quote some descriptive phrases of the fire as related over a television program by the late Prof. Wohl of the University of Chicago.

Burned Records

Meanwhile, let us consider the subject of burned records, the heretofore little-known story of their eventual restoration, and what Cook county now is doing to prevent such an event from ever happening again.

The county recorder, as most people know, is charged by law with recording, for a fee, almost any sort of document brought before him, the few exceptions being that he cannot record currency, bonds, and naturalization papers.

He records deeds to property, leases, liens, wills, charters, and a host of other things. The recording consists of making a copy of the document and keeping it on file in the office. In the long ago, the copying was done in longhand, then

came the typewriter, and now the photostat.

The recorder also maintains a complete set of tract books. That is, he keeps large volumes in which are listed by legal description each parcel of real estate in all of Cook county. In 1959 the parcels numbered around one and one-quarter million—the figure grows by leaps as large acreages of farm-lands are subdivided for residential and other uses.

When a transfer of title is filed, when a lien on a property is filed, or when a court enters any sort of judgment affecting a property, the recorder's staff not only takes a photostatic copy of the document, but also enters on the tract book a notation of the happening. By glancing at the tract book, anyone can see the name of the property owner (unless held in trust, in which case the trust holder is named), the date of purchase, the date of recording, and any other pertinent information that applies to the property.

Recorded deeds and tract books complement one another, and any layman, including a youngster, can understand that these are vital records by which one can prove to the world, if necessary, that he owns a certain piece of property. These records are doubly important should the owner lose by fire, theft, or otherwise the deed which he is keeping in a dresser drawer or in any other place of storage.

So now one can imagine the horrible state of affairs into which proof of property ownership was thrown when the Chicago fire not only destroyed most of the deeds kept in 15,000 homes and nearly 2,500 places of business, but all of the recorder's records as well.

Moreover, it should be remembered, the recorder's destroyed records not only involved those properties swept by fire, but every parcel of real estate within all of Cook county, including suburbs and farm lands.

A property owner, after the ashes had cooled (the fire even burned the wooden blocks with which a portion of the

streets were paved), might pick his pathetic way back to a pile of smelly rubble and say: "This must be my lot."

His utter dejection gradually would be replaced with newborn hope and determination, however, and he would decide to build again. But he probably would have to borrow the necessary money, and would have to mortgage the property to secure the loan. How, tho, could he legally prove that he even owned the lot? He couldn't. Not at that time, nor for several months thereafter. And in some instances legal entanglements caused by the fire were to crop up in the courts for the next three-quarters of a century.

Before we explain the straightening out of this tangle, let us go back a step to the Sunday night of Oct. 8, 1871.

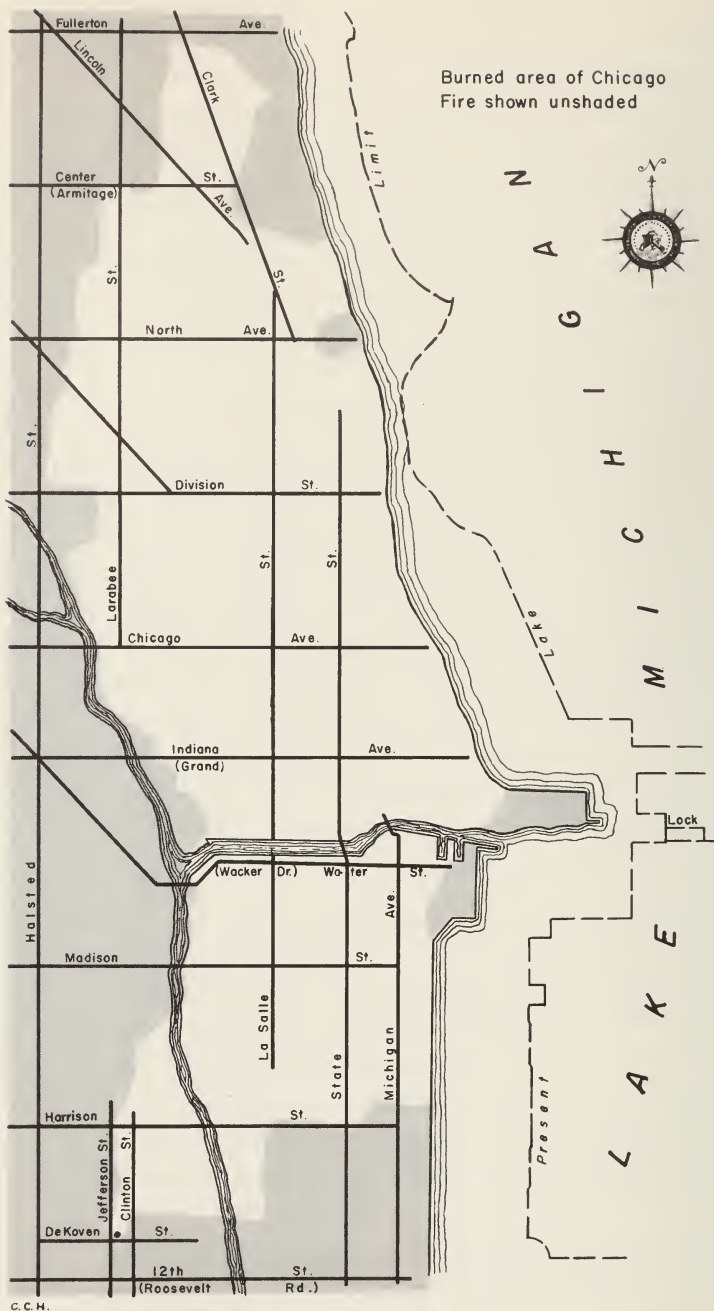
Background Of The Fire

As most school kids know, the fire started sometime around 9 p. m. in the cow barn at the rear of the home of Patrick and Catherine O'Leary, 137 DeKoven Street. (This now is 558 DeKoven, the city's street numbering system having been changed in 1910.)

Mrs. O'Leary supplemented the family's meager earnings (Pat was a laborer) by keeping five cows and selling milk in the neighborhood. At the time, her livestock holdings also included a calf and a horse.

Whether or not one of Mrs. O'Leary's cows actually kicked over a "coal oil" lamp to start the blaze is a moot (or should we say "moo"?) question. It is something akin to asking whether Babe Ruth, in 1932, actually pointed to the Wrigley Field wall over which he was to knock Charley Root's next pitch and give the Yanks another win in their four-game world series sweep over the Cubs. The safest answer to that is: If Babe didn't call his shot, he could have—he was that great.

Fanned by a strong southwest wind, the fire, out of control from the beginning, swept northeasterly. By 1:25 o'clock Mon-





The O'Leary residence at 558 DeKoven street. Cow barn, in which fire started, stood at rear. Strangely, the house escaped the fire that destroyed most of Chicago.

Courtesy Chicago Historical Society

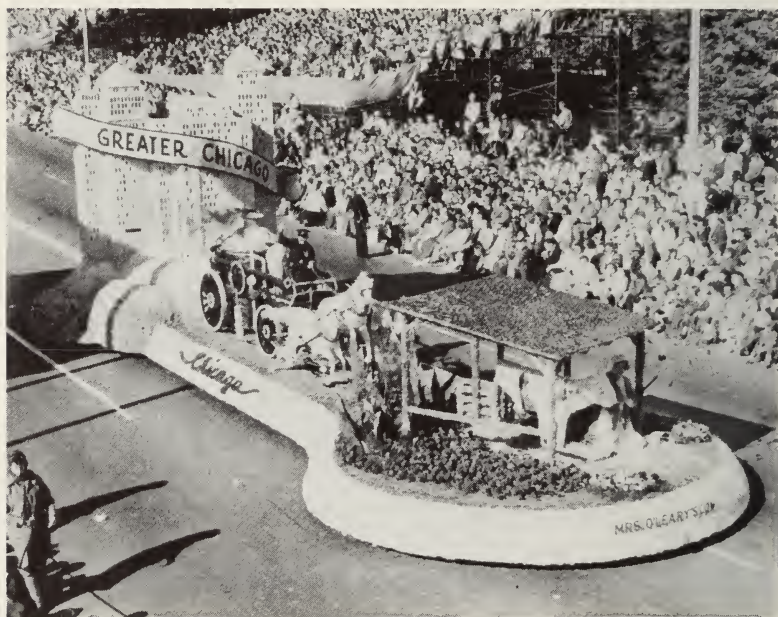
day morning, some four and one-half hours after its beginning, it had reached and was licking the exteriors of the courthouse, and surrounding buildings.

The courthouse of that day (see accompanying pictures of all Cook county courthouses) was on the same site as the present combination county courthouse (often called county building) and city hall. The land, owned entirely by the county, is bounded on the north by Randolph st., on the east by Clark st., on the south by Washington st. and on the west by LaSalle st.

The courthouse that was burned had been constructed in 1853, enlarged in 1858, and again enlarged in 1870. The offices of the mayor of Chicago and other city officials, then, as now, occupied the west portion.

The building, valued at about \$2,000,000, had four full floors, the lower one of which was slightly below ground level and might be termed a basement. On top of this structure was a two-story tower that contained a four-faced clock and a five and one-half ton bell.

By 1:30 o'clock the tower was aflame, by 1:50 the prisoners were being released from their basement cells, by 2:00 the building was a mass of flames, at which time the 66-year-old Mayor Roswell B. Mason fled northward in Clark street, his only remaining route of escape; at 2:15 the bell crashed thru



This float, depicting the Chicago Fire story, won a first prize for Chicago in the 1960 Tournament of Roses parade at Pasadena, Calif. (*AP Wirephoto*)

to the basement, and minutes later the entire courthouse, the pride of the populace, was a complete ruin.

Why were not the records in at least the recorder's office removed? The answer now appears quite simple. They weighed tons and there was not sufficient time for their removal after



Utterly devastated in great fire of 1871 was Chicago's business district. Picture, taken from Chicago river bridge, looks eastward down Randolph street. In background stands shell of Cook county's once proud courthouse.

Courtesy Chicago Historical Society

it became apparent that the "fireproof" courthouse was doomed for almost immediate destruction.

Yet there always is an element within society that would look for a scapegoat to blame.

On Oct. 25, 1871, the Chicago Evening Mail¹ carried the following bitter and apparently unjustified comment:

"If Mr. Norman T. Gassette had been half as zealous in attending to his duties as County Recorder as he was in getting his friends into office, he would have saved the priceless records of the Court House. A moderate amount of energy and sense would have secured the services of a hundred men, at the cost, if necessary, of ten thousand dollars, and had every book con-

1. Copies of the newspaper are in archives of Chicago Historical Society.

veyed to a place of safety. But a fire is very different from a ward meeting."

Where could the poor recorder at that time of night have recruited a force sufficient to carry away the tract books, deeds, and other recorded documents? With not only the courthouse but with all adjoining buildings a mass of flames, men were running for their very lives, and even a nearby jeweler, unable to save his stock, purposely gave it away by the handfuls to fleeing persons, some of whom were the released prisoners.

A county commissioner, Daniel Worthington, had come to the courthouse shortly before its destruction and argued up until the last minute not only against removal of any records, but even against the freeing of the prisoners, stanchly proclaiming the building to be "fireproof."

For a few months immediately following the fire, the functions of county and city government were carried on in rented quarters west of the Chicago river. Meanwhile, a temporary building, costing \$75,000, was being constructed at Adams and LaSalle streets. It was completed and occupied by certain of the city and county offices in less than a year.

A new courthouse and city hall, meanwhile, was being planned and built on the public square, site of the burned edifice. The county's east half of the new building was completed in 1881 and occupied in 1882. The city's west half, however, was not completed and occupied until 1884.

Shortly after the fire, the county recorder secured a new set of maps and tract books and was ready to start anew the recording of deeds and other instruments. But because so many of the property owners had no deeds to record, their documents having been destroyed by fire, the recorder was comparatively helpless.

Emergency legislation was needed. Accordingly, on April 9, 1872, the state legislature enacted a law, known as the "Burnt Record Act," which provided methods for re-establishment of

property records.

The act stipulated, among other things, that the owner of a property whose deed had not been destroyed could re-record the document, that copies of court orders of transfer (if any existed) could be accepted by the recorder as valid, and that the county board might purchase from abstract companies any



Photograph of first building erected in burned district after the Chicago fire of 1871.

Courtesy Chicago Historical Society

existing maps, tract books, or other official entries and have them recorded in behalf of the property owner.

The most important provision, however, was the one stipulating that in cases of destroyed records, the claimant of a property could go into any court in the county having chancery (court of record) jurisdiction, present whatever evidence he could muster to support his claim, and, if the judge was satisfied, the judge was to issue whatever order necessary proclaiming ownership. The court order then could be recorded

with the county recorder. (Liens against a property also could be similarly re-established thru the courts.)

The best evidence of this nature proved to be the records kept by private abstract and title guarantee companies, of which three were in operation in Chicago. These records, mostly of tract book nature, had been compiled thruout the years as properties changed hands and new deeds were recorded.

A sworn statement by the abstractor, certifying that a person was shown by the abstractor's books to be the owner of a certain parcel of property, would satisfy the court.

Since the buildings housing the three abstract companies were located in the downtown area and were, themselves, to be consumed by fire, how were the books of these companies preserved?

The answer to that is another interesting part of the fire story. Each of the companies, thru heroic efforts, saved a portion of its books, and later, by combining their records, found that they could produce evidence of ownership for every parcel of land thruout the county.

For that picture, let us turn to one of the few writings describing it. Everett Chamberlin, on pages 208-11 of his book, *Chicago And Its Suburbs*, published in 1874 by T. A. Hungerford & Co., Chicago, said of the three abstract companies:

Chase Brothers. At the time of the fire this was still the leading abstract firm in town, employing a force of 25 men, and having accumulated a collection of 300 volumes of indexes, 230,000 pages of letterpress copies of abstracts—in all, some three tons of manuscripts. The fire came, and destroyed a portion of these books, but fortunately the most valuable part was saved, and is now in daily use, supplementing other valuable parts saved from the flames by the other conveyancers mentioned below.

Shortall & Hoard. Mr. Shortall arrived at the place where his precious books were stored at midnight. . . . Observation already told him that the safeguards which had been

thrown around his property were not, as had been supposed, sufficient. The only safety lay in removing the books beyond the district likely to be burned over.

What to do for a means of conveyance? For Shortall, tho versed in all manner of legal conveyances, was not equal to this emergency without help from a conveyancer of a more literal or physical type. But the carters were the greatest men in town that night, and in the vicinity of Larmon block none could be got, for love or money, to move those books. The only other resort was in the rear pocket of Shortall's trowsers. (Chamberlin's spelling.) He drew it forth—a revolver! and requested the nearest carter to come alongside and anchor while his craft could be filled with books from upstairs.

By keeping this instrument carefully trained upon the commander of the unknown craft, Shortall was able to hold him there while the boys of the office brought down most of the books, and while the flames roared and the walls toppled around them. A friend came to the rescue after a while, with a wagon more commodious and a driver more trustworthy than the one whom Shortall had impressed into his service.

The latter was, therefore, honourably discharged and reasonably paid. The friend's wagon was driven off in the direction of safety, and the books were saved. A great many loose crannies in our land titles were thereby made snug and tight, and Shortall's fortune was made. The exertions by which the other sets of abstract books were saved were scarcely less brave and praiseworthy.

Jones & Sellers. The books of Messrs. Jones & Sellers, which were also contributed to the joint library of archives from which the most of our land titles are now verified, were started at a later period than either of the two sets referred to above. . . . These books, like those of the other firms named, were rescued by dint of great exertion from the consuming element, hardly any portion being lost in any case except those least valuable, viz., copies of abstracts.

Alliance Formed

The fire over, and every scrap of the public records gone up in the fiery whirlwind, the abstract men were not long in

perceiving that they held the key to the land title situation. It was found that by combining their books a record could be made up which would afford not only a complete chain of title of every tract in Cook county, but would also furnish very full evidence relative to the effect of all judgments—in fact a thoro inquest could be made by means of these books into all the strong and weak points of possession, claim, or conveyance. The three firms therefore lost no time in forming an alliance, and in making themselves ready to serve the public.

Chamberlin further pointed out that since the new state law made it possible for the county to purchase the records from the abstract companies, the county asked the abstract combine what it would take for their books and was told the price would be \$750,000. The county thought this exorbitant, and dropped the matter.

This left the property owners with the responsibility of going to the now combined abstract company to obtain evidence of ownership which they could present to the court for the re-establishment of clear titles.

"The result is," Chamberlin wrote, "the public is voluntarily paying out more than two-thirds as much per year to this single concern for abstracts as the outside price asked by the owners for their entire set of books."

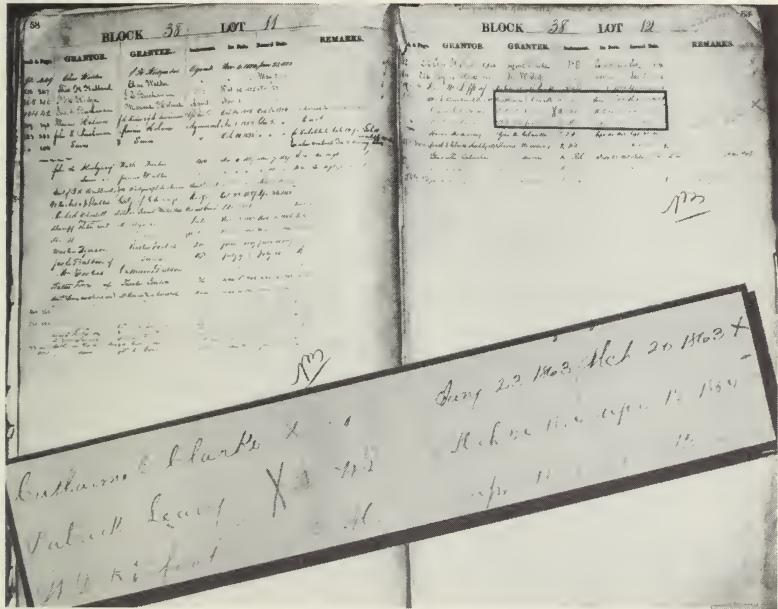
To complete the ownership picture of the private abstract firms, J. Frank Graf, retired vice president of the Chicago Title and Trust Company, in a pamphlet prepared recently for the company, says:

"The combined books of the three firms were leased on Dec. 1, 1872, for a term of years to Messrs. Handy, Simmons and Company. . . . In 1879 this firm became Handy and Company, and in 1887 was succeeded by the Title Guarantee and Trust Company. This latter company became the owner of all of the ante-fire records of Cook county and in 1901, thru further consolidations, the records passed into the ownership of Chicago Title and Trust Company."

Warren E. Thompson, assistant vice president of the Chicago Title and Trust Company, early in 1959 told the writer of this history:

"There is a legend that some of the records were buried in the sand on the beach, and there is an unsupported gag going around that grains of sand still are to be found among the pages of the tract books."

When this author was leafing thru the title company's tract book that contains Patrick O'Leary's record of ownership of the DeKoven street property (see accompanying picture), we, too, looked for imbedded grains of sand and were a bit disappointed at finding none.



Tract book saved from Chicago fire, possibly having been buried in lake shore sands. Opened to page that has historical significance, here is shown (enlarged inset) that Patrick "Leary," meaning O'Leary, on March 24, 1864, purchased improved property at 558 DeKoven street where, in 1871, Mrs. O'Leary's cow allegedly kicked over lantern that started fire. Not having full purchase price of \$500, Pat borrowed \$100 from W. D. Kerfoot, mortgaging property. The O'Learys sold property Dec. 9, 1879. This land-record book and others like it are proud possessions of Chicago Title and Trust Company.

Thus it was that little by little and piece by piece, as property owners re-established their titles thru court orders, the county recorder gradually rebuilt his books.

Living Witness Helped With Records

Because there were some discrepancies and missing portions, however, the county board in 1903 appropriated funds for rewriting the recorder's books.

One of the persons who helped rewrite the books that year is still living and active today. He is Gustav C. Buchholz, a former employe of the Chicago Title and Trust Company and now an employe in the office of County Assessor P. J. Cullerton.

"The county," recalls Buchholz, "contracted with A. R. Marriott, then a vice president of the Chicago Title and Trust Company, to bring a staff of workers into the recorder's office and rewrite the tract books.

"In performing this work, Mr. Marriott was acting as an individual and not as an agent of the title company. I was a teen-age kid at the time and was a member of the Marriott staff that did the work. I now cannot recall if we rewrote all of the recorder's books, or just a portion of them."

Records of the other county offices were less vital than those showing property ownership and no attempt was made to re-establish most of them following their loss. That is one of the difficulties that has confronted this researcher in compiling the portion of Cook county's history that preceded the fire.

Love Finds A Way

Yes, all of the county's records, worth untold sums of money, were destroyed in the fire, but someone in the county clerk's office apparently grabbed a sheaf of marriage application blanks and license forms before fleeing the burning building, evidence again that love supersedes all else.

Today there is to be found in the vital statistics department of County Clerk Edward J. Barrett's office the first marriage

license issued after the fire.¹ Slightly dog-eared, but still intact, it shows that one John G. Blain on Oct. 10, 1871, even while the city's ashes still were smoldering, secured a license to marry Miss Alice R. Miller, and that the marriage was performed the same day by the Rev. Edward P. Goodwin, pastor of the First Congregational church. The license was issued by John G. Gindele, clerk of the County court, which then was the official title of the county clerk.

Thus did Mr. Blain and Miss Miller lead to the Cook county altar a procession that, since the fire, has numbered some 2,520,000 couples.

Records of births and deaths also are kept by the county clerk, but the state law making mandatory that he keep them was not enacted until July 1, 1916. Only about five per cent of the births and deaths that occurred between the time of the fire and 1916 were recorded with the clerk, and then on a voluntary basis. Now, of course, the registrars for the 30 so-called "country" townships within Cook county and for the city of Chicago not only file these vital statistics with the county clerk, but also with the state department of public health in Springfield.

County Guarantees Titles

(Before getting away too far from the subject of the county recorder's office, let us here mention briefly that Cook county, like private title guarantee companies, has its own system of issuing fully guaranteed property titles, at low charge.

(This is known as the Torrens system, named after Irish-born Sir Robert Richard Torrens, who went to Australia and became that country's first premier. Sir Torrens devised the system whereby all other real estate property owners within a given district—in our case, Cook county—guarantee the title of any property owner who secures his title thru the Torrens

1. On Sept. 18, 1959, shortly before this volume went to press, Mr. Barrett gave this original license to a New Jersey descendant of the Blains.

department. The Torrens department is a division of the Cook county recorder's office.

(The system was brought to Cook county [its first introduction into the United States] by an act of the 1897 state legislature. It is not used elsewhere in the state because private title guarantee companies, realizing the competitiveness of its nature, up to 1960 had blocked legislation that would make easy its acquirement.

(Nearly 25 per cent of the one and one-quarter million parcels of real estate within Cook county is registered under the Torrens system, and the gross intake to the county now is \$700,000 per year, of which one-fourth, or \$175,000, is net profit to the taxpayers.

(The head of the Torrens department, of course, is the county recorder. But its officer in direct charge of operations is the chief title examiner, a position now held by Thomas J. Matousek.

(Matousek, an attorney, has been with the Torrens department since 1922, serving successively under Records Joseph F. Haas, Mrs. Salomea Jaranowski, Clayton F. Smith [now a county commissioner], Edward J. Kaindl, Victor L. Schlaeger, Joseph T. Baran, Joseph F. Ropa, and the incumbent, Edmund J. Kucharski.)

But now, back to the fire aftermath again. As we stated earlier, the matter of destroyed property records was to plague the courts and legal circles for years. As late as 1959, Dennis J. Normoyle, who retired on June 15, 1957 as Circuit court judge after 30 years on the bench, recalled that about 1950 a case came before his court involving disposition of a lot that had been purchased by the last known owner on Sat., Oct. 7, 1871, the day before the fire. The owner had disappeared, never to be heard from again—whether he perished in the fire or just ran away from the scene of disaster never was established.

And even as we go to press with this volume, nearly 89 years after the fire, a Chicago attorney is trying to find evidence to support a contention that the city of Chicago, shortly after the fire, took illegal possession, due to the fire, of a piece of property now worth \$500,000. We do not know the merits of his case, if any, but mention it here merely to indicate the long-lasting reverberations that can be caused by such a disaster.

Could It Happen Again?

In the concluding portion of this fire aftermath discussion, let us ask: Could such a devastating and destructive fire ever happen again?

Yes, it could.

But there are qualifications to that answer. Chances are possibly a million to one that no such fire of similar origin and nature could sweep the city again.

The wooden houses that kindled and fed the great conflagration of 1871 have been replaced, for the most part, with fire-resisting structures of brick, steel, aluminum and concrete.

Modern fire-fighting equipment and techniques of today are so much superior to those of nearly a hundred years ago that there is no comparison. Major fires of today ordinarily are confined to a single building or area.

But on the other hand we now are living in an atomic age, and altho it is quite improbable, there still is a distinct possibility that an enemy, God forbid, might drop a bomb that could flatten Chicago and its surrounding suburbs, or any other great metropolitan area.

If such a remote disaster ever should happen, could Chicago rise again? Yes. Because of the natural reasons that make this a logical site for a great city, survivors and outsiders would reconstruct a new, bigger, and even better Chicago and Cook county.

But in event of such a disaster, would the records of local

government be preserved, or would they again go up in flames, or possibly be blown to bits?

We know now that the records could not possibly be destroyed to the extent that they were in 1871 because the Cook county government and other major taxing bodies now are in the process of duplicating vital records and court orders by the modern method of microfilming, and are storing the films in security vaults at different places within the city.

In this filming process, pictures of documents are taken on small rolls of film that occupy but a handful of space as compared with voluminous storage space required for the original records. Microfilming also has been refined to the point where within minutes, or even seconds, copies of an individual document can be reproduced from the roll of film itself.

This microfilming now is in process in 25 offices and departments of the county, including County hospital, but the enormous task still was far from being complete when this was written. With the exception of one office, which is doing its own microfilming, the work is being carried out under the able direction of Edmund J. Brennan, director of the county's department of central services.

Because of the magnitude of work involved in the recorder's office, County Recorder Kucharski is supervising the microfilming of documents under his jurisdiction. There the filming of recorded deeds is given priority, but Kucharski said his office in time would film even the tract books which provide a running history of vital facts pertaining to individual parcels of property.

Altho many of the films of vital county records are being stored in various places of security, as we have mentioned, such storage of films does not meet fully the county's needs and requirements. This is because many of the films are needed for everyday use in reproducing copies of individual records. In other words, the need is not so great for the safe storage of

the films as it is for the safe storage of the bulky, original records, themselves.

Some abstract companies, banks, and other private Chicago firms in recent years have built for themselves underground places for storage of films, principally in the neighboring state of Wisconsin. There these Chicago interests have dug down, beneath layers of limestone, to construct vaults that are believed to be as secure as mortal man can devise.

President Ryan Announces Plan

With Cook county's need, however, for a place in which to store bulky original records, and at the same time have the records available for ready reference, the location of security vaults at far-away places appears impractical.

"I have a proposal that may solve our problem," announced President Daniel Ryan of the Cook county board in an interview shortly before this volume went to press.

"I soon shall start board action and seek the approval of the other commissioners and the general public for the construction of adequate and handy security vaults within our own Cook county forest preserves," Ryan said.

"Engineers, of course, will have to tell us the nature of the construction necessary, such as to size, depth, and whether to locate the vaults beneath strata of rocks, or under concrete and leaden slabs and layers of soil," he further explained.

* * *

As we said, we would include some fine descriptive paragraphs of the Chicago fire that were written by the late R. Richard Wohl, associate professor of social sciences at the University of Chicago.

Prof. Wohl's account was read dramatically by him and illustrated with pictures and other visual aids in a televised program over Station WTTW Channel 11, on the evening of Feb. 28, 1957. It was one of the Everybody's America series, all written by Prof. Wohl, and sponsored by the University of

Chicago's Office of Radio and Television. Prof. Wohl died Nov. 15, 1957 at the age of 36.

We are extremely grateful to the widow, Mrs. Rhoda L. Wohl, for her kind permission to reproduce any or all of the speech. And we are equally grateful for similar permission granted by the producer of the series, Edward Rosenheim, Jr., associate professor of humanities at the University of Chicago, and to James Robertson, program manager for WTTW.

The portion of Prof. Wohl's speech that we herewith reproduce reflects, for the most part, the mood and thinking of the mass of Chicago citizenry that was fleeing from the onrushing holocaust. It contains a minimum of repetition with what we have written in the earlier part of this chapter.

A Professor's Description

Prof. Wohl speaking:

Did the fire begin because the Chicago firemen were exhausted from an enormous \$700,000 fire that they had been fighting the night before? Did it begin because there had been 30 fires that had worn out Chicago's firemen and fire companies between Sept. 30 and Oct. 5? Did it begin because there was a serious drought that had parched the entire West and left Chicago a tinder-box, the kind of drought that made the leaves fall from the trees in July? Did it begin because a fresh load of hay had just been put down in the O'Leary barn?

The whole answer, of course, will never be given. No one really knows where a disaster like this fire had its ultimate beginnings.

What happens to people in a disaster?

No one ever knows, because no one is prepared for a disaster, and it is difficult to speak generally about such calamities, because it is difficult to distinguish between disasters.



FRED A. FULLE
County Commissioner

In some of them people respond to danger fairly quickly and adjust rapidly. One would imagine that bombing a city would not only destroy it quite thoroughly and could demoralize its population as well. Yet, when the scientists on the strategic bombing survey went back to Europe, at the end of the last war, they were astonished to find that even cities that had been regularly plastered with high explosives managed, somehow to recover themselves quickly; to improvise ways to live and ways to work; and that after a while the recurrence of bombings had produced a kind of saving "habitual response" so that people managed to live on even under these devastating conditions.

There are other kinds of disasters.

There is the kind of disaster which comes when a volcano explodes suddenly or the sea runs mad in a tidal wave. But these, dreadful tho they may be, allow for no preparation and are over relatively quickly. These are natural phenomena run beserk, and people face the unexpected as best they can.

A great fire is perhaps the most devastating of all disasters, little as there is to choose between them. It consumes everything in its path. It leaves nothing behind. It demoralizes and destroys completely; and in an important sense, a fire in a large city, toward the end of the nineteenth century, must be considered at least partially a man-made calamity. A great urban fire out of control points to a lapse of human control; a lapse of social authority in a fundamental matter of protecting life and property.

How do people react at such a moment?

Again, no one knows because no one observes a disaster. Disasters have some spectators—ghoulish creatures who, for a moment, pause to watch what's happening, to draw excitement from the danger and damage about them, as some people did in Chicago, looking at the tumbling buildings; the collapsing roofs; the gorgeous flames; but these are watchers only for the moment. They are quickly turned into participants, enwrapped in the horror themselves. The fire creeps closer, is at their heels, and they become fugitives, themselves. We can only pick up fugitive impressions, vague or vivid images that outline a picture when assembled.



Engraving from Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper, published Oct. 28, 1871, depicting, in Leslie's words, "The Great Fire in Chicago—Panic-stricken citizens rushing past the Sherman House, carrying the aged, sick and helpless, and endeavoring to save family treasures." *Courtesy Chicago Historical Society*

Here, for instance, is a picture of a panic-stricken crowd. (See accompanying picture.) Obviously it was drawn after the event, shortly after the fire, and it represents what the artist imagined the panic and the horror must have been like. But even so, the picture has a synthetic symmetry; the people seemed to be moving together, and however startled and frightened they are, they form some kind of an organized whole.

The worst thing about such a fire is that it creates vast confusion; every man, even though he is surrounded by thousands of his fellows, feels himself essentially alone. Let me try to tell you something now, not of the path of the fire itself, but what people afterwards said they saw. These, as I said, are only snatches, impressions that I am putting together.

First of all, it was an astonishing phenomenon to the people who saw the fire that it seemed to generate very little smoke. High gusts of flames leaped up in the air and devoured the smoke that they presumably created, so that the whole city,

and the people running before the fire, seemed to be enveloped in a bright sea of living flame.

The fire had its own sound. It had that muffled, pulsating roar that flung a rumble ahead of itself clear across the city. As the fire progressed, not only the sound but the stench of the burning buildings ruled the air; and amidst the roar of the fire, the sights and the sounds, and the enormous heat that it threw off, there seemed to be a general impression that everyone involved in it was speaking at the top of his voice, yelling, making sounds, speaking to no one in particular, hurtling forward with urgent movement. Above the high roar of the general noisiness of the people who were stampeded and panic-stricken there were further, sharper screams. Suddenly, the city seemed full of horses—horses trapped in burning stables and screaming as they were engulfed in the flames.

Sea That Cannot Be Stemmed

A crowd in panic, it hardly needs to be pointed out, does not move in any orderly fashion. It is a sea of people that cannot be stemmed, and occasionally the enormous mob would fling aside some of the people in it and trample upon them, or else suddenly part, at an onsetting charge of a fire engine plunging forward.

Nothing, as I said, can really describe all that happened, and seemed to be happening at once. Let me, however, sketch one or two vignettes. The fleeing people, the multitude of carriages and horses, the screams and the sounds, apart, the domestic animals of the city, the cats and dogs, were underfoot and fled like the people. As the houses were consumed from cellars and from wainscotings poured rats in great hordes, and filled the streets. Children were separated from their parents; wives from their husbands. It is difficult to describe what was anarchy in an organized discussion.

In addition to the confusion, the flight, the fear, and the danger attendant to the fire, there were still enough people who paused to capitalize on the disaster for a dangerous moment; the looters and the criminals who paused to snatch up what they could. Looting was started, perhaps, by some of the prisoners who had been released but in the end was more widespread.

There is one dreadful anecdote that was told by a participant who saw a man, in his shirtsleeves dancing a wild jig drunkenly on the top of a piano, howling at the top of his voice that the fire was the poor man's friend. Others, half-crazed by greed, plunged their naked forearms through glass windows and with dripping hands gouty with their own blood snatched up what they could. In one instance a man was halted as he filled up a wagon with loot and was threatened with a pistol. The looter was heedless to all danger, scoffed at the gun and said, "Shoot if you will." He was not fired upon; the man with the gun shrugged in despair and let him drive off with his spoils.

For the rest there was a frantic bacchanalian quality superimposed on the fire itself; men drinking wildly to allay their terror. Strangely enough, some saloons remained open selling whiskey until the flames licked the very edges of the bar.

The fire drove the people before it, and as they were driven forward, not only the buildings were destroyed but the whole social fabric of the city seemed to collapse. Only half of the police force was on duty when the fire broke out, and it spread so quickly that the rest could not be assembled. The firemen, exhausted from the very start, fell back increasingly before the onslaught of the blaze, abandoning their fire equipment; outmatched and outrun by the fire.

The city government, society, was just as much in retreat as were men in the face of the fire. There were some attempts, some pitiful, some savage, to stem the disorganization. . . . A poster printed in the full fury of the fire by Pinkerton's Private Police, tells a story. Strangely enough, the poster is entitled, **TO THE ATTENTION OF THIEVES AND BURGLARS**. It actually was an instruction to the officers of Pinkerton's police and is addressed to his lieutenants, sergeants, and to the private policemen. It says in part:

"Any person caught stealing, or seeking to steal, any of the property in my charge, or attempting to break open the safes, as the men cannot make arrests at the present time, they shall kill the persons by my orders. No mercy shall be shown them, but death shall be their fate. Allan Pinkerton"

A desperate measure, and if the prose is a little less awk-

ward and excited in another proclamation (struck off on the ninth as the fire was still raging), it still touched the same critical issue. In this proclamation the mayor of Chicago forbids the sale of drink in any saloon until further notice. Of course, this was a futile gesture. The ordinance could not be enforced.

Let me turn now to say a little about the fire itself, and how it spread, because a fire that runs uncontrolled through a great city is quite unlike any fire that we know from experience or that we can easily imagine. Even the great blazes that fill the pages of the newspapers are somehow less than a fire running through a city unchecked. Ordinary kinds of fires are checked by the police and fire departments and are contained and controlled. Even tho their damage may be vast, they don't threaten a whole community to its very roots.

Fire Created Its Own Wind

The Chicago fire was entirely unlike this. It was a holocaust to which no human help could stay. First, the fire itself must not be thought of simply as a mass of flames. These, to be sure, were enormous and shot up high into the heavens. But they were surrounded and clothed by an invisible curtain of very heated air, as hot or hotter than the flames themselves. As the heated air rose from the fire, cooler, upper air rushed down, sometimes with a force approaching that of a gale. And what I am describing to you now is how the fire in effect created its own bellows, which fanned and spread it.

The great path of the fire as it flickered through the city was not simply a passage of flames. What was astonishing and terrifying to those who experienced it was that masses of this heated air would move, carrying within them tremendous amounts of burning material, which would be flung down on other combustible parts of the city. It was not contact with the flames that spread the fire, but the movement of this invisible and enormously heated fire cloud.

How hot and bright was the fire?

Here, again, it is impossible to say ; but it has been claimed, authoritatively, that a hundred miles away, in Holland, Michigan, men had to lie down in ditches to escape the scorching wind that blew from Chicago clear over the cooling surface

of the lake. And it was said, on the other side of the country, that sailors passing Cape Hatteras were astonished to find themselves caught in a rain of soot and dust, and were puzzled where this came from. They discovered later that this rain of ashes came from Chicago, carried along on the gusts of the upper air.

The heat of the fire can perhaps be illustrated by these few relics, which the Chicago Historical Society has been kind enough to lend me, to show you. I am holding here a group of teacups which rested in some family's larder, stacked for use at the next meal. As you can see, they melted and fused together.

I wonder if any number can express the intense heat that is required not only for the melting of these ceramics, but for the complete destruction of the glaze. These cups were burned as if left in a kiln. . . .

Here were a group of egg cups, taken from the same set as the teacups I just showed you. When the fire struck them, the first blaze of heat, ranging perhaps between 750 and 3,000 degrees Fahrenheit, split the cups; broke them; and caught them before they fell apart, melted down the clay, and spread the glaze over them so that you can see that the broken parts themselves are now covered with the glaze that originally covered these cups.

But perhaps the greatest and most terrifying testimony was what the fire did to metal, iron and steel, supposedly so resistant to fire. It was said that one pile of steel ingots, 200 yards away from a blazing building, turned first cherry red, then white-hot, then fused together, like a mass of glowing maple syrup. . . .

The destruction of sections of the city, as the fire passed out of control and ravaged through it, drove people into herds and clusters, and one of the most hideous shelters that was sought by no less than 30,000 people, and their animals, was in the cemetery at Lincoln Park. Here they improvised a temporary camp, gruesomely enough among the local gravestones and the mausoleums which had, themselves, been attacked by the fire and split open.

Many people had rushed to the lake shore and had at-

tempted a desperate expedient to get away from the heat. They had thought first to bury themselves in the sand up to their chins, while one of them remained outside, dousing the rest with water. But the heat crept on them, and they were suffocated.

On the whole, the city attempted to improvise relief as quickly as it could. . . . In a poster issued on October 10th, two days after the outbreak of the fire, the city government declares, I'm afraid a little futilely, that all public school buildings and churches will be opened to shelter the homeless and to provide food and succor those who are, themselves, without it. Little, however, could be done at the very outset. Later on, more organized and effective relief was available, and a pattern of soup kitchens and shelters was established. . . . It is astounding how quickly Chicago managed to retrieve itself from the fire.

When Chicagoans looked up from the ruins, what did they find?

They found, in essence, that strange phenomena almost unprecedented in modern times, of a city very nearly wholly destroyed. . . . What was really impressive in the face of this enormous destruction, was the rapid development and the increase of recovery and relief. Fifty carloads of relief food and clothing arrived very promptly. All the railroads cooperated by sending these freights entirely free of charge; and the telegraph companies did not charge anything for sending their messages. The disaster was too great for ordinary economics to rule. . . .

Supplies were gathered from such far away places as New York to be sent to Chicago; and these supplies . . . represent only a fraction of what was sent from areas nearby. Milwaukee, while the fire was still raging, sent three fire engines, and by Monday had already sent many carloads of provisions.

By Monday night, St. Louis, a traditional rival of Chicago, sent a full train of supplies and had 80 more tons waiting at the station to be sent as soon as transport could be arranged. In a matter of hours, a half-million dollars was raised in St. Louis.

Cincinnati, another urban rival, raised \$160,000 by Monday sunset, and by mid-November Chicago had received two and a quarter million dollars. All told the city received, in contributions and in help, very nearly five million dollars, with nearly a million of that coming from foreign countries. . . .

Thus ended one part of the drama, the fire, the disaster.

Perhaps the greater drama came later on, as Chicago refused to recognize the fire as a defeat, as an ultimate and fatal calamity. Its attitude is perhaps symbolized by a real estate promoter, an indigenous species in Chicago, Mr. Kerfoot, who put up the first building after the fire. . . . It was a mere shanty, raised up as a defiant gesture to the hot ashes which surrounded it. Mr. Kerfoot proudly announced he had lost everything except his wife, his children, and his energy; and this might have been a slogan set for the rebuilding of Chicago.

Not long after that the first cornerstone was laid . . . for the resurrection of the city. Here, again, the figures of reconstruction are as fantastic and as rapid as those of the destruction itself. A week after the fire, the ashes still hot, nearly 6,000 temporary shelters were raised. Five weeks after that, 200 permanent buildings were being built. And 12 months later, 100,000 carpenters, masons, teamsters, and other workers were putting 10,000 impressive new structures on the map.

Unique Form of Advertising

It was a testimonial to Chicago that the fire which had sought to destroy it, to wipe it out, in fact became an advertisement for the city's growth. The extent of the calamity proved how large, how prosperous, and how economically important Chicago was. Many contemporary explanations of the disaster, however, ran in another direction. One Methodist minister insisted that the calamity was a direct result of the wrath of God at the city of Chicago because it would not close its saloons on Sunday.

A southern newspaper insisted that the fire was due entirely to Divine retribution for the ravaging of the South by the North in the Civil War.

In the end, however, over the claims and boasts of rivals

who thought to see the city destroyed, and despite all other explanations, a great constructive cry arose within the city that it was now necessary to capitalize on the city's great future, that Chicago would rise up after the fire more prosperous than ever before; and if I may use a humble illustration the lowly hog, to indicate the later prosperity of Chicago: In 1872, the year after the fire, twice as many hogs arrived for butchering in Chicago as had come in 1870.

The fire itself deeply impressed the imagination of the country. . . . A poster issued by the mayor of Wooster, Ohio, who was deeply impressed by the need of civic protection from fire, and fearing a calamity like Chicago's . . . declared that "the bosoms of the people in Wooster are heaving with sympathy for the calamity that has been suffered in Chicago," and it goes on to say that on the coming Fourth of July, no fireworks shall be released in the city, lest it be overtaken by the same dire fate.

As Chicago rapidly recovered from its fire, it began to proclaim the disaster as a great commemorative event, celebrating not the disaster, not the horror of the conflagration, but the great and triumphant recovery that had been made. . . .

Henry Ward Beecher, a man of the Lord, with a gift for nice phrasing called Chicago, after the fire, the Phoenix City, the city that had risen restored from its ashes. A city, after all, is killed only if its spirit dies, not if its property is destroyed, nor if its wealth is dissipated, or even if some of its inhabitants are killed, and not even the great fire in Chicago could kill Chicago's spirit. There was glory in rising above the ruins to rebuild the city, but it was a painful glory, a great triumph won by a great sadness.

* * *

With that Prof. Wohl ended his dramatic presentation of certain aspects of the Chicago fire.

In concluding this chapter, let us, the author of this history, point out that Mayor Richard J. Daley of Chicago early in 1959 announced plans for construction of a \$3,000,000 academy and drill school for the Chicago fire department.

And where was Mayor Daley's project to be located? As a reader might guess, it was none other than the square block that encompasses the 558 DeKoven street address, where Mrs. O'Leary's cow, so long ago, allegedly kicked over the lamp that started the fire that destroyed Chicago.

CHAPTER 9

WORLD'S LARGEST HOSPITAL

ACROSS the street from the great Cook County hospital, 1825 W. Harrison st., is a small, grassy plaza, in the center of which stands a statue of Louis Pasteur, the French chemist who contributed so much to medical science.

Inscribed on the statue's base is the following Pasteur quotation:

"One doesn't ask of one who suffers: What is your country and what is your religion? One merely says, you suffer, this is enough for me, you belong to me and I shall help you."

* * *

Cook County hospital, with its 3,200 beds, is the largest general hospital in the world. In 1958 a total of 97,644 persons were admitted to it as bed patients, and the average daily population of such patients was 2,711.

An additional 161,900, tho not admitted as bed patients, were cared for at the hospital, and 78,272 (representing 240,857 patient visits) were cared for at the county's outpatient clinic across the street. (Outpatients are those afflicted

with less serious ailments for which hospitalization is not required.)

Thus in 1958 Cook county, principally at the expense of the taxpayers, treated a grand total of 337,816 persons at County hospital and outpatient clinic. This is a greater number than the combined populations (1950 census) of the cities of Peoria, Rockford, and Evanston.

Nor do these charity patients include 3,480 long-term, chronically-ill, and 806 tubercular patients now cared for annually at the county's Oak Forest hospital, licensed by the state in 1956 to operate as chronic disease and tubercular hospital units. (More about Oak Forest in a later chapter.)

The 1959 county appropriations for maintaining and operating County hospital was \$20,085,286. (This included \$10,351,563 appropriated for the Cook County School of Nursing which provides the nursing care in the hospital in addition to the operation of the training school.)

The annual appropriation, which is from the county's corporate or housekeeping fund, does not cover any portion of the construction costs of the 21 buildings which comprise the County hospital group. If erected at present prices, these buildings would cost the county tens of millions of dollars.

Cook county's 1959 appropriations for administering charity in all its institutions totaled \$36,295,249, or 52 per cent of the \$69,694,868 cost of operating the entire county government for the year.

Altho other taxing bodies—state, city of Chicago, and Cook county townships outside of Chicago—assist Cook county annually to the extent of about \$16,000,000 in helping defray its diversified charitable administrative expenses, these funds, it should be remembered, also come from taxes.

The \$36,295,249 cost does not include the almost staggering figure of \$107,000,000 in state, federal and city of Chicago funds expended annually by Cook county's welfare

department in meeting relief needs of the old, the disabled, the blind, the dependent children, and the unemployed.

Why, one may ask, does the Cook county government provide care for the medically indigent?

Illinois law requires it of all counties. Other states have similar laws. In fact, from time immemorial enlightened nations and groups of men have provided in varying degrees for the less fortunate in their society.

One portion of the Illinois law, dealing with assistance to the medically indigent (Chapter 23, paragraph 439-14 of the Illinois Revised Statutes, 1955) says, in part:

"When any person . . . shall fall sick or die not having sufficient money, property, or other resources, including income and earnings available to him over a twelve-month period, to meet the cost of necessary medical, dental, hospital, boarding or nursing care, or burial, the supervisor of general assistance charged with the duty of providing general assistance to the governmental unit in which he should be at the time of his illness or death shall give or cause to be given to him, such care as may be necessary and proper . . ."



JOHN J. TOUHY
County Commissioner

This does not mean, however, that an indigent person will be given free care at either County hospital or at the Oak Forest hospital if there are other members of his immediate family who may have means with which to pay.

If a father or mother, son or daughter, brother or sister can do so, and fails to pay the County hospital or Oak Forest hospital expenses of any family member, he or she, under existing law, can be brought into court and compelled to pay.

During 1958 Cook county collected \$514,887 from patients and their families who were able to pay in full or in part for such hospitalization, and \$1,357,685 from insurance companies whose policy holders either were hospital patients or were the ones legally responsible in accident cases involving hospital patients.¹ In 1958 the charge for patient care at County hospital was \$18.48 per day, and with ever-mounting costs, indications were that this would go higher. (Patient care at the county's Oak Forest chronic disease and tuberculosis hospitals is figured at \$150 per month.)

Altho the state paid the county \$12,656,851 for patient care at both the County and Oak Forest hospitals during 1956, under the then existing state law, the county was permitted to keep but \$8,500,000 of this. The remaining \$4,156,851 was abated, which means the amount of taxes the county could levy for corporate or operating purposes had to be reduced by that amount.

In 1957, however, the county board was successful in obtaining state legislation changing the \$8,500,000 figure to \$13,000,000, thereby increasing the county's hard-pressed corporate fund revenues by \$4,500,000. Leaders in obtaining this legislation were Board President Daniel Ryan; County Commissioner John J. Duffy, chairman of the board's finance committee; and County Commissioner Wm. N. Erickson, chairman of the board's legislative committee.

(Cook county, in odd-numbered, non-election years, is permitted by law to levy a corporate tax of 22 cents on each \$100 of assessed valuation, and in even-numbered election years, 26 cents. Special elections which fall in "non-election" years are costly and must be paid for by the county out of its regular funds which always are insufficient to meet properly the county's many needs.)

1. From report of Cook County Department of Welfare, Raymond M. Hilliard, Director.

The Cook county's other charitable institutions and endeavors to which we have alluded include the Oak Forest hospital, the Arthur J. Audy Home for Children (formerly the Juvenile Detention Home), Department of Welfare, Public Health Department, Family Court, and public defender. The remainder of this chapter shall continue with the story, both past and present, of County hospital.

Babies By The Thousands

To further point up the magnitude of the activity carried on at County hospital, Dr. Karl A. Meyer, medical superintendent of all county institutions, and Fred A. Hertwig, warden of the hospital, announced that during 1958 the hospital's surgeons performed 14,749 operations. Its doctors also delivered 17,784 babies at the institution that year. (In 1959 the number of births rose to 17,992.) Some expectant mothers, when asked to which hospital they are going for delivery, reply with a twinkle in their eyes: "To Mr. Cook's hospital, of course."

Further statistics show that during 1958 the X-ray diagnostic department took 292,656 pictures; the X-ray therapeutic department, which has one of the few Cobalt units in the country, gave 28,819 treatments; the sterile solutions laboratory made 343,318 preparations which, if purchased on the open market, would have a value of approximately one-half million dollars; the blood bank administered 13,913 transfusions, and the laboratories ran 755,683 tests.

Cook county is short of adequate hospital facilities. In 1957 and for a number of years prior thereto President Daniel Ryan and the other members of the county board were considering ways of raising funds for the construction of two additional buildings on the hospital grounds. One was to be a four-story, 500-bed addition to the main hospital building, and the other a new five-story out-patient clinic with a volume of 400,000 patient visits a year. This latter would replace the old and

inadequate Fantus clinic building which has a 200,000-patient-visit volume.

Operating heads of the county's institutions informed the county board early in 1957 that they needed a total of \$70,000,000 to put their institutions in proper order.

President Ryan shortly thereafter appointed a 49-member special citizens advisory committee to study the requests. This committee, of which James A. Cunningham, investment banker, was chairman, decided the county could "get by" for the present with a minimum of \$38,208,000.

The county board decided to ask the public to vote on bond issues totaling that amount at the June 3, 1957 judicial election. Included would be \$10,000,000 for the 500-bed hospital addition.¹

A vociferous group of objectors, however, threatened to campaign against the entire bond issue if the county constructed the 500-bed addition at County hospital instead of setting up a branch of County hospital on the "south side" of the city, as they desired.

Rather than jeopardize the entire rehabilitation program for all county institutions, President Ryan persuaded the board to eliminate the proposed \$10,000,000 addition. The rehabilitation bonds were reduced to a total of \$28,200,000, which amount was authorized at the public referendum. Of this, \$12,800,000 was to be spent on County hospital improvements.

Economic And Social Problem

We mention here, because it is of social significance, that some 90 per cent of the babies born at County hospital are Negro. Among other patients at the hospital, the Negro percentage is 56, statisticians say.

These high percentages are somewhat surprising when one

1. For many years officials proclaimed County hospital a 3400-bed institution, and that it was, but the number of beds occupying corridor space had been so reduced by 1958 that the institution then had but 3200 beds.

considers that the Negroes within the Chicago metropolitan area constitute but 16 per cent of the total population, according to statistics compiled in 1958 by the Chicago Association of Commerce and Industry.

The ever-mounting percentage of Negro patients at County hospital, observers believe, is due in part to the great influx into Chicago of Negroes from southern states in recent years. A large number of these newcomers, it has been pointed out, are from the more unskilled classes and, lacking skill, cannot command the better-paying jobs.

The fact that most of them produce large families further lessens their ability to meet medical expenses. Also complicating the situation is the fact that some private hospitals discourage the admission of Negroes, thereby increasing the load the county must carry.

Tho it may be true that wages and opportunities are greater in Chicago and other large northern cities to which the southern Negroes are flocking, it may take some years for many of these newcomers to become fully adjusted; in fact, it more likely will be their children who, having broader opportunities for learning trades and professions, will first reach the desired economic and social level their parents had envisioned.

This never-ending influx of southern Negroes also creates other problems in Chicago, major among which is the housing shortage, but that is another matter.

To operate such a huge hospital, Cook county in 1959 staffed it with 4,326 employes, and even then found itself short



CHARLES F. CHAPLIN
County Commissioner

of help. These employes were divided by numbers into the following classifications:

- 1,305 maintenance workers, office workers, and administrators (This figure does not include those similarly employed at the Cook County School of Nursing.)
- 607 graduate nurses, including supervisors and instructors
- 123 student nurses from the Cook County School of Nursing
- 322 affiliating student nurses from other nursing schools
- 47 student graduate nurses
- 252 graduate practical nurses
- 113 student practical nurses
- 883 attendants and orderlies
- 135 medical interns
- 175 resident physicians
- 179 attending physicians and surgeons
- 185 associate physicians

The attending physicians are licensed practitioners, many of outstanding renown, who tho maintaining private practice, donate a certain number of hours each week, without compensation to work in County hospital. They are chosen by rigid competitive examination and are appointed for six-year periods.

Associate physicians are appointed for one-year terms to assist the attending physicians and are not required to take civil service examinations.

Desirable Place To Intern

Because County hospital is so large and has such a diversity of cases, many of which are unusual ailments, young medical graduates consider it a great privilege to intern at the institution. They, too, are chosen thru stiff competitive examination.

A major maintenance problem at County hospital is that of keeping the 21 buildings and their surrounding grounds tidy. Located within an 18-acre area, the buildings have within them an estimated 8,000 persons daily, except on visiting days

(Wednesdays and Sundays) when an additional 5,000 persons are present.

"Just picking up and cleaning up after them, especially on visiting days when we have about 13,000 persons around, is a sometimes discouraging job," commented Warden Hertwig recently. "I don't know why some people are so slovenly."

Cook County hospital is noted not only for its largeness, but also for its greatness, medically-wise. Many doctors who have practiced there have become world famous thru their contributions to the field of knowledge in both medicine and surgery. Medical advances made at County hospital shall be dwelt upon in more detail later, but first, let us go back to the beginning of Cook county's charitable activities when the frontier country and the practices of medicine were equally raw and primitive.

Free medical service was being rendered in the Fort Dearborn community even before Cook county was established, and several years prior to the incorporation of Chicago as a village.

The "hospital," if such it can be called, was none other than the fort, itself, and the doctors were those sent here by the United States army. Their primary objective, of course, was ministering to the troops garrisoned here, but the physicians then, as now, were charitable and did what they could for the handful of civilians, even those with no funds, who lived around the fort.

Dr. James Nevins Hyde (1840-1910) recounted in his book, *Early Medical Chicago* (Fergus Printing Co., 1879, p 15), the "first recorded" account of an early amputation in Chicago. It was performed in 1832 by Dr. Elijah Dewey Harmon, then residing with his family in Fort Dearborn.

"A half-breed Canadian," wrote Dr. Hyde, "had frozen his feet, while engaged in the transportation of the mail on horseback from Green Bay to Chicago.

"The doctor, assisted by his brother, tied the unfortunate man to a chair, applied a tourniquet to each lower extremity, and with the aid of the rusty instruments which he had transported on horseback through sun and shower from Detroit to Chicago, removed one entire foot and a large portion of the other.

"Needless to say these were not the days of anaesthetics, and the invectives in mingled French and English, of the mail-carrier's vocabulary, soon became audible to every one in the vicinity of the stockade. It is gratifying to note that the first recorded amputation in Chicago was crowned with a most satisfactory success."

First Cook County Hospital

To answer the question, where was the first Cook county charitable hospital, one first must define what is meant by the term "hospital."

If one construes it to be a county-owned public building in which free medical treatment is rendered the indigent sick, then the almshouse or poorhouse erected on the public square in 1832, was the original County hospital.

To Dr. Hyde we again are indebted for the account of a major operation performed at this county poorhouse in those early days. In the aforementioned book, page 27, Dr. Hyde quotes the Hon. J. D. Caton, Chief justice of Illinois as saying:

"In 1838, a laborer on the canal near Lockport, fractured his thigh, and before the union had been completely effected, he came to Chicago on foot, where he found himself unable to walk further and quite destitute. He was taken to the poorhouse where he grew rapidly worse."

The account further relates that the handful of Chicago doctors, most of whom were newly arrived, knew little of one-another's abilities, but finally designated one of their number to amputate the leg of the patient. The leg, accordingly, was removed—at the hip. Dr. Hyde said this is reported to have

been one of the first hip amputations in medical history.

Dr. Hyde added—and he appears not to have meant it as a grim joke—that altho the patient died a month later, “the operation was regarded as a success.”

Before leaving the writings of the interesting Dr. Hyde, we would like to borrow another passage from his book, page 16, in which he quotes from an emigrants’ guide, written in 1833, describing the nature of the Chicago populace at that time.

The emigrants’ guide, according to Dr. Hyde, said that Chicago had “a doctor or two, two or three lawyers, a land agent and five or six hotel-keepers; these may be considered the stationary occupants and proprietors of the score of clap-board-houses around you; then, for the birds of passage, exclusive of the Potawatomies, you have emigrants, speculators, horse-dealers and stealers; rogues of every description, white, black, and red; quarter-breeds, and men of no breed at all; dealers in pigs, poultry, and potatoes, creditors of Indians; sharpers; peddlers; grog-sellers; Indian agents, traders and contractors to supply the Post.”

As previously noted, the Cook county board, in the Chicago Daily Democrat, April 4, 1850 (Chicago Historical Society), listed county expenses over a period of years. In no column is the word “hospital” used, but one item, “pauper expenses,” shows that for the remaining nine months of 1831, after the first county board took office, the “pauper” expense was \$27.67; that by 1840 it had risen to \$4,318.14, and by 1849 to \$5,810.26.

From this it would appear that medical and other charitable expenses met by the county were grouped merely as “pauper expenses.”

Hanging in the office of Warden Hertwig at the present County hospital is a historical plaque which says in part: “a County hospital was opened in Tippecanoe Hall on the corner of Kinzie and State streets, March 30, 1847.” Similar

references also are to be found elsewhere.

County Hospital Number Two

That such a County hospital existed apparently is verified by an article which appeared in the April 6, 1847 issue of the Weekly Chicago Democrat, a copy of which has been preserved by the Chicago Historical Society.

This early-day article says, in part:

"In consequence of the increase of population, and of the great amount of sickness, during the past year; the accommodations at the county almshouse were found to be insufficient, and it became necessary to get a large number of sick persons boarded and taken care of at private houses in the city.

"This was necessarily attended with great expense, and to avoid this, as well as to secure better care, the public authorities determined to separate the sick paupers from the well ones, and employing the latter at the present almshouse, to provide for the former a hospital in the city.

"This would be absolutely necessary for those who are too sick to be transported far; and being supplied with good care and kept neat, clean and well ordered as a hospital should be, will be found, not only a saving of expense to the public, but an advantageous change for the poor.

"Accordingly they have rented a building on the north side of the river, and put it in order, and it is now ready, or nearly so, for the reception of the patients."

The same article points out that the Common Council (city council) was at that time considering turning the old Fort Dearborn garrison into a combined "city and county poorhouse and hospital," but was meeting with resistance from residents who objected having "miserable humanity" in the midst of the growing young city.

The article does not say that the "public authorities" who established the hospital north of the river were the members of the county board, but the statement that the "county alms-

house" was no longer sufficient lends credence to the presumption that such authorities would at least include the board members.

Use of Tippecanoe Hall as a county hospital apparently was of short duration, however, for from Jan. 1, 1851 until Aug. 8, 1863 the county placed its sick in the Mercy hospital, 2537 S. Prairie Ave., at a cost to the county of \$3 per week per patient.¹

County Hospital Number Three

Dr. William E. Quine (see footnote) has written vaguely as follows:

"In August, 1863, the county transported its people from the Mercy hospital to Jefferson, and cared for them, together with later arrivals, in a building of its own and under its own administration, until Jan. 15, 1866. Dr. D. B. Fonda was in charge."

This hospital was one of the group of Cook county buildings at Dunning, a small settlement in the country township of Jefferson and was some 12 miles northwest of down-town Chicago.

(The address today would be 6500 W. Irving Park road, in Norwood Park township, that township having been carved from the original Jefferson township. The remainder of Jefferson township now is within the city of Chicago. The Chicago State hospital, an institution for the mentally ill, now is located on those once-owned county grounds. As we shall see later, the county in 1851 had purchased a poor farm there and in 1855 began operating it as a poorhouse, insane asylum, and, in 1863, a hospital.)

1. Recounted in a paper "Early History of the Cook County Hospital to 1870" read Nov. 17, 1910 by Dr. Wm. E. Quine before a joint meeting of the Society of Medical History of Chicago and the Alumni Association of Cook County. (Published October, 1911 by the Society of Medical History, and now on file at the Chicago Historical Society.) Dr. Quine became a member of the County hospital staff in 1870, after having served his internship at the institution.

County Hospital Number Four

The hospital which Cook county next took over for its patients had been known, first, as City hospital, and later as Desmarres hospital. Its creation and operation had been of bizarre nature.

In the first place, according to Dr. Quine (his account has been verified in other sources), the structure, which was on Arnold street (now LaSalle) between 18th and 19th streets, was built in 1854-55 by the city as a temporary frame structure for the isolation of cholera patients.

The city demolished it in 1856 and replaced it with a three-story brick building at a cost of \$75,000. Meant to be a general hospital, it was completed in November, 1857, but was not put into use for two years, due to a conflict between the homeopathic and "regular" divisions of the medical profession, each demanding its particular form of practice be followed.

To break the deadlock, the city in August, 1859, leased the hospital to a group of physicians and surgeons for five years, with the agreement the staff would treat city patients for a uniform fee of \$3 per week. Members of the staff included Dr. George K. Amerman (1832-1867) and Dr. Joseph P. Ross, both of whom later became county commissioners.

With the Civil war in progress, the United States government took over the hospital in 1862, opening it as an army hospital on Oct. 29. The government changed its name to Desmarres hospital Aug. 23, 1864, and continued to operate it until Nov. 12, 1865. (During the latter portion of its tenancy, the army used the hospital solely for the treatment of eye and ear ailments of soldiers, which practice brought on much criticism from medical circles.)

In the meantime, Drs. Amerman and Ross, who had remained on the staff during the war, entered politics with a purpose in mind and were elected as members of the county

board of supervisors, now board of county commissioners. Soon thereafter (at the close of 1865) they prevailed upon their fellow board members to lease the hospital from the city.

Under the terms of the lease, the county merely exchanged for the use of the hospital the use of 160 acres of county-owned land just south of the then city limits. The land was needed by the city for a reform school. It was bounded by 40th st., Ellis ave., 43rd st., and Lake Michigan. Titles to the properties were not exchanged.

"One of the conditions on which the board consented to assume the administration of the hospital," Dr. Quine wrote, "was that the cost of maintenance should not exceed \$10,000 for the year, a condition that was accepted with delightful alacrity by Amerman and Ross; but nevertheless, the cost of maintenance for the second year was \$20,000, for the third year, \$23,000, and for the fourth, \$30,000, and doubtless it has kept on increasing ever since . . . with the increase in the number of inmates and employes and the increase in the cost of living."

(Note: Dr. Quine was on the right track regarding trends in population and costs. In 1866, it will be remembered, the population of Cook county was around 265,000, but by 1959 had climbed to an estimated 5,000,000 or more, and County hospital costs were around \$20,000,000 yearly.)

Thus at the beginning of 1866, Cook county had itself another hospital. Benjamin F. Chase, who had been warden of the county's hospital at Dunning was transferred to the new institution, and his wife was appointed "matron." On Jan. 12 Nils T. Quales, a medical student at Rush Medical college, having ranked highest in a competitive examination, was named the hospital's lone intern. A few days thereafter the patients from Dunning were transferred to the latest Cook County hospital.

The hospital then had 130 beds, but before long became

so over-crowded that in 1870 the county built a new wing onto it at a cost of \$7,250. This added 90 beds. From 1866 to 1871, inclusive, admissions averaged 1,400 to 1,500 annually, Dr. Quine reported.

"Considering the time," Dr. Quine wrote, "the 'old county hospital' was a distinctly imposing structure.

"It was heated with steam, well lighted and ventilated, abundantly furnished, well supplied with modern conveniences, and delightfully wholesome from every point of view. Some years later it became infested with rats and roaches through lack of competent management, and the process of deterioration thus begun was allowed to continue. It was always liberally supported by the county.

"In 1869 and 1870 the sewerage system was thoroughly renovated following the discovery of a break in the main conduit and the escape of tons of human excrement under the basement floor."

Famous Doctors At County Hospital

Numbered among the members of the hospital staff was Dr. H. Webster Jones, nephew of Daniel Webster, famous American statesman and orator.

Concerning Dr. Webster, Dr. Quine wrote: ". . . a most gracious, lovable, learned and talented man, an excellent teacher, and an inspiring counsellor, who was greatly beloved and admired by everybody, and by the pauper patients as well as by patients of princely wealth and station.

"I doubt if there ever has been an obstetrician in Chicago who has had anything like the clientele or the standing in professional and popular esteem that was possessed by H. Webster Jones."

Among the many who have received their medical training as interns at County hospital, none has become more famous than the world-renowned surgeon, Dr. Nicholas Senn (1844-1908), after whom Chicago's Senn high school was named.

"There were giants in those days," wrote Dr. Quine, "and Nicholas Senn was one of the tallest of them all. No man has reflected greater glory on the Alumni Association of the Cook County hospital, or on the medical profession of America, than he. His career was the marvel of his generation."

Born in Switzerland, Senn, accompanied by his parents, came to America at the age of 10 and settled in Washington county, Wisconsin. In 1868 he received his medical degree from the Chicago Medical College and then interned for 18 months at County hospital. (This was County hospital, number four, at LaSalle and 19th streets, as mentioned previously.)

Returning to Wisconsin, Dr. Senn practiced at Ashford and then at Milwaukee, in the latter location spending many a sleepless night in the basement of his office where he advanced his learning thru the dissection of numerous bodies, both animal and human.

Dr. Senn studied further at famous medical schools in Europe, in 1882 became professor of surgery in the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Chicago, and in 1888 became associated with Rush Medical College.

Dr. Senn published 23 books of renown on medicine and surgery; was an enthusiastic world traveler and explorer, and was the donor of many endowments to medical institutions. His written works, together with thousands of other medical volumes, now may be found in the medical reading room, fittingly called the Senn room, of Chicago's John Crerar Library.

Dr. Henry M. Lyman (1835-1904), a member of the medical board of this LaSalle and 19th streets County hospital, and who served on the staff as "curator of the dead house," likewise has written a paper, read before the Cook County Hospital Alumni Association, in which he recounts some details of the institution's operation.

"Everything was of the most primitive character," wrote

Dr. Lyman.¹ "The warden was an ancient country farmer turned politician. The surgeons used their own instruments, and the physicians carried their own stethoscopes. There was a knife and a saw, a chisel and a mallet in the dead-house; and the interns contrived to keep a few test tubes and a little nitric acid in their rooms. But Dr. Ross (Joseph P. Ross, head staff physician) and the surgeons did lots of good work, and the hospital was always full of patients.

"Soon after opening the institution cholera invaded the city. It soon entered the hospital and took off one of the warden's daughters. Several other patients died with the disease, but on the whole we escaped very lightly. When the pestilence revisited the city in 1869 or '70, tho a number of cases were brought into the hospital, it did not spread among the other patients or inmates in the building."

The good Dr. Lyman, in the same bulletin, also recounted an incident in which he explained why one of the four staff surgeons at County Hospital No. 4 backed away from surgery and was content to just attend meetings of the medical board, of which he was a member. The gentleman was Dr. Charles G. Smith.

Concerning Dr. Smith, whom he termed "brilliant," Dr. Lyman said:

"The doctor was . . . so busily occupied with private practice that he could not give much time to hospital work. On one occasion he manifested some gleams of enthusiasm for genito-urinary and rectal surgery, and undertook to remove a large excrescence from . . . a big Irishman who was suffering from . . . piles.

"Not considering it necessary to anesthetize the patient for such a trifling affair, he made the man lean over the back of

1. A Bit of the History of the Cook County Hospital. Henry M. Lyman, M. D. Bulletin of The Society of Medical History of Chicago, Vol. 1, No. 1, October, 1911. Chicago Historical Society.

a chair, and then began investigation . . . The doctor was very near-sighted . . . and buckled down close to business.

"But hardly was he ready to operate when his patient gave a yell and a kick, landing his foot square in the doctor's face, demolishing his spectacles and fairly upsetting his equilibrium. The operation had to be adjourned for want of spectacles and Dr. Smith concluded that a nominal connection with the staff would suit him better than active duty."

County Hospital Number Five

Because of Cook county's ever-growing population, its County hospitals, like its courthouses, seldom have been large enough, even when new, to fully meet the needs.

Thus it was in 1874, shortly after the great Chicago fire, with a building boom on and with more and more people converging upon the giant young metropolis and its environs, that the county board decided upon a new County hospital, on a new site—its fifth.

In that year the board purchased for \$119,000 the west-side block bounded by Harrison, Wood, Polk and Lincoln streets, thereby creating a site that eventually was to become and still is the very medical center of the world.

That County hospital, with its present 21 buildings, eventually was to overflow onto adjacent properties outside the block was inevitable.

In 1874 the county started construction of the first buildings on the new site, transferring its patients to them on Oct. 6, 1876. The new hospital then was comprised of two pavilions for patients, a boiler house, laundry, kitchen and mortuary.

The late Dr. Frank Billings, attending physician of renown at County hospital from 1893 to 1900, and who became dean of the faculty at Rush Medical school (at times also held professorships at both the University of Chicago and the Northwestern University Medical school), in 1922 wrote reminis-



Main building at County hospital No. 5, erected in 1882. In 1912 it was replaced with main building of present hospital. Portion of other County hospital buildings shown here were constructed during 1874 and 1875 and placed in use Oct. 6, 1876.

cently upon County hospital history.¹

"The clinical amphitheater and connecting corridors were completed in 1887," he recalled. "The administrative buildings and two additional pavilions were erected in 1883-84. The operating and receiving building were completed in 1897.

"The children's and contagious pavilion was built in 1903 and the building for the treatment of advanced tuberculosis patients was constructed in 1908 and occupied in 1909." (This brought the bed capacity of County hospital to 2,000.)

In 1912, Dr. Billings further recounted, "the county, finding some of the original buildings inadequate, tore them down and erected a new administration building and two pavilions." In 1916 it built two more pavilions, bringing the total cost of the four pavilions and the new administration building to \$4,176,644.

1. History of Medicine and Surgery, James C. Russell, Biographical Publishing Corp., 1922, p 264

Tracing further the building program, we note from Warden Hertwig's 1955 House Staff Manual that the Psychopathic hospital was erected in 1914 and the present Children's hospital in 1928, both close to the main hospital building.



Album in possession of Chicago Historical Society bears notation that this was the "examining room" at Cook County hospital, about 1890.

In 1935 the 820-room Cook County Hospital Nurses Dormitory was erected at 1900 W. Polk st. and connected to the hospital buildings by an underground tunnel. Its cost, including equipment, was \$2,360,500, of which \$431,000 was an outright grant from the federal Public Works Administration.

The county in 1939 purchased the old West Side hospital at 519 S. Wolcott st., re-establishing it as an outpatient clinic. The clinic was named in honor of Dr. Bernard Fantus who had just died.

In 1942 the county board purchased for \$110,000 the old

McCormick Institute for Infectious Diseases, 629 S. Wood st., and the adjoining old Durand hospital building, converting them into the Hektoen Institute for Medical Research of the Cook County Hospital. (A fuller account of the work of this now-famed research laboratory is given later on.)



County hospital scene about 1890. *Courtesy Chicago Historical Society.*

This brings the institution's physical setup down to the post-World War II years which, likewise, are dealt with in full on subsequent pages.

Methods Of Appointment

Concerning personalities and practices at the new County hospital shortly before the turn of the century, Dr. Billings also wrote in his aforementioned reminiscences as follows:

"The first warden of the new hospital was Hugh McLaughlin, who served from Dec. 18, 1876 to the end of 1878. Daniel W. Mills was warden from 1879 to the end of 1881, Joseph

Dixon during 1882-83, and Wm. J. McGarigle from 1884 to July 5, 1887."

Before continuing with what Dr. Billings had to say concerning these men, particularly Warden McGarigle, we interject here the reference to McGarigle made by Michael Loftus Ahern in his *Political History of Chicago*, published by Donohue and Henneberry in 1886.

On page 266 of this publication, Author Ahern noted that McGarigle, formerly the general superintendent of police for Chicago under Mayor Carter H. Harrison, was appointed warden at County hospital on Sept. 1, 1883.

In tribute to McGarigle, Ahern wrote that the "immense" County hospital "is conceded by the world's travelers to be the finest hospital in the world, including the Vienna hospital, and the magnificent precautions against fire are high tribute to Mr. McGarigle's inventive genius. The County hospital was never before managed more skillfully, and several members of the State Board of Charity last year in an interview stated that they never had seen better management and discipline in an institution of its kind."

That Ahern might have tempered his enthusiasm over McGarigle's activities had he published his history a year later is found in Dr. Billings' remarks, page 265 of the aforementioned *History of Medicine and Surgery*, which follow:

"It was during the regime of these three men (Mills, Dixon and McGarigle) that the greatest political activities of the board occurred, particularly during the wardenship of McGarigle. Some members of the board of commissioners in that period of time used their positions to financially advance themselves in the ways mentioned above (Editor's note: accepting money for appointing doctors to serve as attending physicians at County hospital), and some politicians, growing bold, formed a ring to graft upon the county in every possible way.



Another ward at County hospital, about 1890.

Courtesy Chicago Historical Society

"As a result their speculations were finally discovered and the warden, Wm. J. McGarigle, some of the county commissioners, the chief engineer of the hospital and others were tried, found guilty and fined or imprisoned or both."

From Dr. Billings one also learns that the honored Dr. Christian Fenger (1840-1902), after whom a Chicago high school is named, had to buy his appointment to the hospital staff.

Danish-born Dr. Fenger came to this country from Copenhagen in 1878. In an autobiography Dr. Fenger once recounted, in but three brief sentences, his hospital activities, as follow:

"In the spring of 1878 I secured by means of borrowed money a place as physician to Cook county hospital. Here I commenced to give lectures and demonstrations in pathologic anatomy, a science which was unknown to physicians there.



All babies are sweet, including these newborns pictured at Cook County hospital, about 1890.

Courtesy Chicago Historical Society

At this hospital I served first as pathologist, later as surgeon for 12 to 14 years, and introduced Lister's antiseptic operative methods."

(Dr. Fenger is credited by Dr. Billings not only with advancing the knowledge of medicine, but with inspiring younger doctors, notably Ludvig Hektoen, Edwin R. LeCount, and H. Gideon Wells, who in time were to become famous themselves.)

The "going price" in "buying" appointment as attending physician at County hospital in those grafting days reportedly was \$1,000, yet the physicians evidently felt that the added prestige of practicing at such an institution of renown was worth it.

Above and beyond prestige, however, the learned men of medicine who have practiced at County hospital thruout the

years have been motivated largely by their feeling of civic—even sacred—duty to donate, unselfishly, a substantial portion of their time and skilled efforts to the healing of the destitute sick among mankind. It is in their outside, private practice that they make their living.

Dr. Billings also noted that political party lines “mattered not” when it came to grafting. One should always bear in mind, however, that it is unfair to brand an entire group of individuals as grafters just because some of their numbers “go wrong.” At all times in the period alluded to, there were many conscientious men on the county board, and it is a matter of record that in certain instances it was these honest commissioners, themselves, who brought about the cleansing of their own household.

Concerning this “dark period” in County hospital history, Dr. Karl A. Meyer, medical superintendent of all Cook county institutions, has written¹ in a somewhat similar vein, saying, in part:

“The new regime (1876) began auspiciously enough. One-third of the staff was nominated by Rush Medical College, one-third by Chicago Medical College, and one-third by outside physicians appointed by the county commissioners.

“This plan worked equitably until 1881, when a newly elected board exercised its privilege of making its appointments according to its own notions. It authorized a separate staff of homeopathic physicians and surgeons, who were given jurisdiction over one-fifth of all the hospital patients. Furthermore, the patient could not choose the type of physician he wanted to take care of him.

“Political interference with the medical activities of the hospital brought further unrest. In 1882, in protest against the dismissal of a Dr. Edward W. Lee by the board for his experi-

1. Quarterly Bulletin, Northwestern University Medical School, Chicago, 1949, Vol. 23, No. 3, p 271.

ments with skin grafting with skins of chickens and lambs, the whole staff of the hospital resigned.

"This gesture of righteous indignation, however, served no good purpose, for during the next 23 years, the medical schools were not officially represented on the staff of the hospital.

"The board of county commissioners, with no great concern over the loss of academic prestige of the hospital, continued to appoint the entire attending staff, often, of course, without regard for the professional qualifications of the appointees. They doubled the size of the attending staff and allowed, in addition to the homeopaths, the eclectic physicians to control one-fifth of the hospital. This period which ended in 1905 was, on the whole, the darkest in the history of the hospital.

"Yet in spite of the lack of intelligent control of the hospital during this era, there were many qualified physicians connected with the institution. Many began as interns; others came in as attending men."

Dr. Meyer listed among these outstanding medical men of the time, Drs. Christian Fenger, William E. Quine, John B. Murphy, Frank Billings, Frederick Tice, Howard Taylor Ricketts, and Allen B. Kanavel, some of whom are mentioned elsewhere in this history.

"Such men," Dr. Meyer added, "learned and taught medicine and surgery against all the odds of inadequate facilities and unsympathetic administrations."

So it is with a feeling of relief that one learns from both Dr. Billings and Dr. Meyer, as well as from other sources, that the system of selecting physicians was changed.

Rigid Competitive Examinations

Altho the interns always had been selected thru competitive examinations, the county board in that year (1905), with Edward J. Brundage as board president, and with strong civic backing, relieved itself of the troublesome power of appointment.



Main building, County hospital, pictured in 1954. In 1958 county considered erecting a name sign above building, similar to sign superimposed upon this picture by an artist, but plans fell thru, due to cost.



The County hospital group of 21 buildings, as pictured in 1958. Also showing, upper right, are a portion of the University of Illinois medical college buildings.

The commissioners substituted for it the current policy of permitting a committee of hospital staff physicians to select on merit the resident doctors, most of whom are chosen from among the graduating interns, and leaving the selection of attending physicians (in 1958 there were 179) strictly to the results of most rigid competitive examinations administered by the Cook county civil service commission.

Because of this change, there has not arisen for more than a half-century the slightest suspicion of outside influence in the selecting of the medical staff which administers to the sick-poor at Cook County hospital.

* * *

Before leaving the era of the late 1800s completely, it may be of some interest here to note that total hospital expenses for the mid-nineties ran approximately \$250,000 as against \$20,085,286 for 1959.

One finds in a handbook,¹ published by the county board in 1896, that salary appropriations of that year for County hospital, including Detention hospital, totaled but \$98,292.

(The "Detention hospital" then located on the grounds of County hospital, was under County hospital management, and was used in temporarily detaining the mentally ill of all ages, as well as both homeless and problem children, all awaiting court dispensation of their cases. This building eventually was supplanted with the present Psychopathic hospital, built in 1914, and with the Juvenile Detention Home at 2240 W. Roosevelt rd., now known as the Arthur J. Audy Home for Children. Thus for comparative purposes, one now must combine the current operational costs of both County hospital and Audy Home.)

We here list County hospital's 1896 salary appropriations,

1. Now in possession of Municipal Reference Library of Chicago.



Tents for tubercular children, County hospital about 1914. At that time this form of fresh-air treatment was considered to have curative powers.

by positions, not only to show such hospital costs, but also to show the wage structure of those days for various trades, assuming that the hospital jobs paid about the same as those on the outside.

1896 County Hospital Budget

No.	Title	Combined Salaries (yearly)	No.	Title	Combined Salaries (yearly)
1	warden	\$2,500	1	cook	\$ 660
1	chief clerk	1,500	4	carmen	1,440
1	bookkeeper	900	1	gardener	540
2	receiving clerks	1,200	1	laundryman	420
1	night clerk	600	3	asst. laundrymen	720
1	night supervisor	600	1	bathroom clerk, male	360
1	registrar	900	1	bathroom clerk, female	300
1	custodian	720	1	barn foreman	420
1	druggist	900	3	teamsters	1,080
1	asst. druggist	720	1	ambulance man	240
1	druggist's helper	360	1	undertaker	360
2	custodians of instruments	720	1	asst. undertaker	300
2	housekeepers	960	1	coffin maker	480
1	head painter	636	1	morgue keeper	360
3	painters	1,620	1	weigher	600
2	carpenters	1,272	1	head porter	360
1	mattress maker	480	6	porters	1,800
1	storekeeper	720	3	doorkeepers	1,080
1	baker	600	2	watchmen	600
1	asst. baker	480	2	laborers	720

No.	Title	Combined Salaries (yearly)	No.	Title	Combined Salaries (yearly)
1	janitor	\$ 300	4	nurses	\$1,200
1	cook	600	3	nurses	720
1	asst. cook	300			
1	cook, night	360			
1	butcher	480			
2	electrical engineers	1,440			
3	firemen, 6 mo.	720			
3	coal and ash wheelers, 6 mos.	540			
1	boiler washer	360			
1	steamfitter	792			
1	asst. steamfitter	480			
1	plumber	792			
1	asst. plumber	480			
1	sewer man	360			
3	elevator men	1,440			
1	head seamstress	300			
2	sewing machine women	432			
3	linen rm. women	648			
1	laundress	240			
2	wash room women	432			
7	window cleaners	1,680			
1	fumigator	240			
2	messengers	480			
1	chief engineer	1,200			
3	asst. engineers	2,160			
1	woman to help baker	180			
3	tin washers	648			

Ill. Training Sch. for nurses,
incl. all spl. nursing..... 22,200

DETENTION HOSPITAL

1	county physician	\$2,000
1	asst. co. physician	900
1	clerk	720
1	matron	420
1	janitor	540
6	attendants, male	1,800
6	attendants, female	1,800
3	attendants, children's ward	900
2	dry room women	432
1	head ironer	300
2	shirt ironers	432
9	ironers	1,620
4	manglers	720
30	scrubwomen	6,480
1	head waitress	240
6	waitresses	1,296
3	chambermaids	540
1	cook	360
1	asst. cook	240
2	waitresses	384
1	scrub woman	216

Altho these 1896 salaries allegedly totaled \$98,292, the figures listed in the handbook total but \$95,772. With supplies and repairs for the combined institutions costing \$155,-000, total operating costs for County hospital and Detention hospital for that year were \$253,292.

Daniel D. Healy was president of the county board during the period from 1894 to 1898, and James H. Graham was County hospital warden.

In 1895, according to the same handbook, 15,655 persons were admitted to County hospital, and the average daily population was 808.

Infants liveborn at County hospital in 1895 totaled 360, of whom 64 died before leaving the institution. Thus the infant mortality rate then was 17.77 per cent, or nearly one out of five.

By 1959, due to the marvels of modern medical science,

the mortality rate among the 17,992 babies born alive at County hospital that year had dropped to 2.26 per cent, or one death out of forty-four, according to hospital officials. This is low, considering that 2,587, or 14 per cent, of these babies were born prematurely. This is twice the percentage of "premies" born elsewhere, a fact for which no specific reasons are known, other than that most expectant mothers who come to County hospital have had no pre-natal care, including lack of proper diet.

Improved Hospital Wardenship

Contributing to the resurgence of "high level" County hospital management was the fortunate choice of wardens, two of whom were named by Peter Reinberg, board president from 1914 to 1921.

One of the two, Clayton F. Smith, warden from 1915 to 1917, is credited with "humanizing" a somewhat austere institution. His task included the promotion of more harmonious working relations among members of the huge staff, and bringing the patients to realize that they were in the hands of friends—that the ministering of death-dealing contents of a "black bottle" to "unwanted" patients was an evil myth.

(Further details of Smith's life, including many fruitful years of service as a member and president of the county board, will appear in the second volume of this history.)

The other was the late Michael J. Zimmer whose 21-year tenure, 1917 to 1938, exceeds by far that of any other County hospital warden. Thru the "roaring twenties" and the trying depression of the 1930s, Zimmer guided with a capable, understanding, and friendly hand. And even after his retirement as warden, Zimmer continued working for another three years (until 1941) at the hospital as food accountant.

Prior to becoming warden, Zimmer had served successful terms as city alderman, city comptroller, and county sheriff.

Succeeding Zimmer as warden was Manus McCloskey, re-

tired brigadier general of the United States army and holder of citations for war heroics. McCloskey, sometimes controversial, served as warden for eight years—until the close of 1946.

New Era For County Hospital

Altho it long had been recognized in medical circles as unexcelled in the administration of medical treatment, the great institution was permitted to run down physically during the depression years of the 1930s when money was scarce, and during the following World War II years when materials went for war efforts. County hospital was in need of almost complete modernization, extensive alterations and repairs, and new construction to meet the needs of the county's fast expanding population.

With the war over, the rehabilitation was tackled by the county board shortly after William N. Erickson, who had been a commissioner since 1934, was elected president in November of 1946.

Altho Erickson, an Evanston resident, was a Republican, as were the four other "country" township commissioners and one commissioner from Chicago, the program for revamping and revitalizing county institutions received the full support of all 15 members of the board, including the nine remaining Chicago commissioners, all Democrats.

In fact, it has been to the credit of Cook county for nearly a half-century that politics, no matter how vigorous at election times, have not been allowed to interfere with good county government.

Shortly after becoming president, Erickson appointed as County hospital warden the aforementioned Fred A. Hertwig on Jan. 1, 1947.

Erickson was certain Hertwig was the man for the job, having known him since 1916 when they were fellow engineering students at Armour Institute, now part of the Illinois Institute of Technology. (Hertwig was to graduate in 1920 with a BS

degree in civil engineering and a membership in Tau Beta Pi, honorary engineering fraternity.) ,

Hertwig, as since has been proved, was qualified from many angles. He knew engineering, having supervised in the construction of such Chicago buildings as the Carbon and Carbide, the Standard Club, the Medinah Temple (now the Sheraton hotel), the Foreman Bank, the Engineering building, the old Steuben Club (188 W. Randolph st.), and several Balaban and Katz theaters. Thus he was in position to see for himself what was needed at County hospital in the way of physical improvements.

Hertwig also had been a successful manager of the Georgian hotel in Evanston for 15 years. He knew hotel management, knew about food and services, and knew how to spend money wisely. He also knew how to get along with employes, and how to meet the public. But more than that, he had a burning desire to "do a job," as he expressed it, for County hospital, harbor of hope for the suffering poor.

Daniel Ryan, Democratic president of the county board since Dec. 1, 1954, has seen fit to retain Hertwig.

When a visitor now enters the offices of the hospital warden, he is likely to be struck by the smoothness with which a trying business is being operated. That is partly because Hertwig has gathered about him a small but efficient staff of helpers, including Joseph A. Clay, administrative assistant, and Joseph T. Geary, assistant warden in charge of personnel, both of whom handle difficult-appearing problems with apparent ease. Also included would be Hertwig's highly efficient and kind secretary, Mrs. Claire Higgins.

At the outset of the hospital revamping program, complete surveys of the institution were made by two firms of hospital consulting engineers, each looking forward to the needs for years to come.

The virtual rebirth that ensued was financed not only thru

yearly appropriations made by the county board, but also by major bond issues approved by public referendum, one in 1947 for \$7,000,000, one in 1951 for \$6,600,000, and one in 1957 for \$12,800,000.

Completed since 1947 have been some 150 major projects that included such diversified things as reroofing of buildings, replacement of elevators, complete fireproofing of buildings, electrical rewiring of all buildings and conversion from direct to alternating current, major remodeling within buildings to make the best use of space, creation of new research laboratories, redecoration periodically of wards and other rooms, steam-cleaning the exterior of the main building, replacement and addition of much equipment including that for medical treatment, establishment of mobile dental service for school children in rural areas of Cook county, purchase of land and creation of parking space for the use of hospital personnel, the purchase of three additional buildings and construction of two new buildings, and the virtual rebuilding of portions of existing buildings.

Largest single project was the construction of the 15-story dormitory for 350 interns and resident doctors of County hospital. Located at 720 S. Wood st., it is connected to the main hospital by underground tunnel. It was dedicated on May 3, 1953 and named the Dr. Karl A. Meyer Hall in honor of the famed medical superintendent of all county institutions.

Not only does this modern dormitory provide proper housing for the men who put in long hours each day in attending hospital patients, but it has made available for other purposes an equal amount of greatly needed space in the hospital buildings in which the interns and doctors previously had had their scattered quarters. Meyer Hall, completely equipped, cost \$3,000,000.

From a medical standpoint the creation by the county board of the new Radiation Center which went into operation in



Cook county's \$50,000 cobalt beam therapy unit, spectacular cancer-fighting device, was first placed in use in June of 1953 upon opening of new Radiation Center, a division of County hospital. Pictured beside it at time are, left to right, Dr. Irvin F. Hummon, director of department of radiology; Dr. Karl A. Meyer, medical superintendent of all county institutions; Commissioners William N. Erickson (then board president) and Elizabeth A. Conkey, and the late Anton C. Negri, county efficiency coordinator.

June of 1953 was a historical step in the treatment of cancer. The board purchased and remodeled a building at 1900 W. Harrison street, just west of the main hospital, then equipped it with the latest devices known to science for cancer treatment.

The most spectacular of this cancer-fighting equipment is the cobalt beam therapy unit which alone cost \$50,000. This apparatus—one of the few in the United States—provides radiation equivalent to that produced by a 3,000,000-volt X-ray machine and is more penetrating than anything previously used. It more effectively treats deep-seated tumors and treats other tumors with less damage to surrounding normal tissues.

Children with unnatural heart conditions, including those once known as "blue babies," for whom medical science could do little, now receive the finest remedial treatment at the newly-

established cardiac clinic on the eighth floor of the Children's hospital. Equipped with modern facilities, the clinic cost \$100,000.

The thread of the improvement program was picked up by President Ryan when he pointed out on a television program on Dec. 30, 1956, that the county then was in the process of enlarging and remodeling the hospital's receiving division at a cost of some two million dollars and that early in 1957 it was to begin a program for remodeling the main hospital wards.

"We are especially proud," President Ryan continued, "of our recently completed central diagnostic X-ray department which, with its 15 rooms of equipment, cost one million dollars. It will help the hospital to maintain a position of medical supremacy for years to come."



First blood bank in America, established by Dr. Bernard Fantus at County hospital in 1937, is being inspected in late 1950s by, left to right, Dr. George C. Blaha, medical director at County hospital since 1953, Warden Fred A. Hertwig, and a laboratory technician, Mrs. Patricia Hayes.

First Blood Bank

The first blood bank in America was started by Dr. Bernard Fantus on March 15, 1937 at County hospital. Since then great strides have been made in blood therapy.

To maintain this leadership a modern, adequate blood bank was constructed in 1946 at a cost of \$81,000. It is located on the seventh floor of the Main hospital building, replacing the former antiquated one on the third floor.

To the blood bank now has been added bone, eye, and artery banks.

With the advent of Salk polio vaccine in 1956, County hospital cooperated with the Chicago board of health in vaccinating against the dread disease which has killed or crippled so many thruout the years.

A temporary polio inoculation clinic was set up on the first floor of the main hospital building. During the time it remained open (from July 23 to Sept. 13, 1956) 16,071 inoculations were administered. In addition, County hospital contributed five interns each day to the staff of the Chicago board of health which gave inoculations in various other clinics thruout the city during the above-mentioned period.

Hektoen Institute

On the east side of the principal group of buildings that comprise County hospital are two comparatively small, unimposing buildings, the importance of which belies their external appearance.

Located at 629 S. Wood st., they house the Hektoen Institute for Medical Research of the Cook County Hospital. In these adjoining buildings medical scientists work that all mankind may live healthier and happier lives.

The fruits of their pioneering research into all problems of medicine and surgery are extended to the patients of County hospital and, for that matter, to all the world.

The start of the project began in 1942 when the county

board, as previously noted, purchased for \$110,000 both the old McCormick Institute for Infectious Diseases, at the Wood street address, and the adjoining old Durand hospital building (637 S. Wood st.), both then unoccupied.

Because there is some doubt that the county legally can appropriate funds for medical research, regardless of the vast benefits that may accrue to County hospital patients, a group of noted physicians and public spirited citizens incorporated Hektoen Institute in 1943 as a not-for-profit research organization and set about to solicit private funds for its operation. The county board agreed to let the institute occupy the two buildings, using them as a combined unit.

No medical research group ever has had all the funds it could use in fighting diseases, but the public response to Hektoen Institute was most heartening from the start and has been a continuing life-line thruout the succeeding years.

The institute spends between \$225,000 and \$240,000 from private funds yearly on research projects, including salaries of working scientists, materials (including animals for experimentation), and for publishing some 150 scientific papers annually in explaining to the medical profession the results of specific research projects.

Dr. Karl A. Meyer is chairman of the institute's board of trustees as well as being medical superintendent of all Cook county institutions.

Dr. Samuel J. Hoffman, who interned at County hospital and had been a resident physician in pediatrics at the hospital for three years, has been the institute's director since October of 1945. He also is associate professor of pediatrics at the University of Illinois College of Medicine.

Drs. Meyer and Hoffman explain that the institute hires technicians and doctors, the best to be found for specific research projects. The projects to be worked upon are decided by the institute's medical board. In 1959 a total of over 100 such



Dummy street car, on roof of County hospital, was used by physiotherapy department in late 1940s to instruct patients in boarding and alighting. Impractical, its use soon was discontinued. Witnessing demonstration are hospital officials, nurses, occupational therapy volunteers (young ladies not in uniform), and medical interns.

medical scientists were thus employed at one time at Hektoen. In addition, a number of County hospital's staff doctors join in the research work.

More spectacular of the diseases now being fought within the institute's research laboratories are cancer, leukemia and other blood diseases, coronary thrombosis and other heart afflictions, brain and nerve ailments, cerebral palsy, diseases affecting liver, kidneys, and other body organs, and, of course, communicable diseases.

Surgical techniques constantly are being improved. The uses for new drugs are being expanded. (Commercial drug producers annually give the institution between \$150,000 and \$200,000 worth of new drugs with which to work.)

Since this is not a medical treatise, we shall not attempt to explain the details of the many advances being made in medicine and surgery at Hektoen, tho they are occurring almost daily.

These men of medicine who work at Hektoen Institute are spurred on, not only by hope, but by concrete evidence that they and others like them elsewhere—the latter including Dr. Jonas E. Salk, discoverer of polio vaccine—already have accomplished wonders in alleviating human suffering.



Cook county's first mobile dental unit in which 3,000 school children are treated annually. Inspecting the traveling dental office when it was placed in service in 1952 are, left to right, Commissioners Elizabeth A. Conkey, James F. Ashenden, William N. Erickson (board president at the time), John J. Touhy, Warden Fred A. Hertwig of County hospital, Commissioner John Mackler, Jr., Dr. Michael C. Arra, director of the county's dental clinic, and Commissioner Edward M. Sneed. The unit is used by county dentists at schools within unincorporated areas and at schools within villages that have no health departments.

The published scientific papers on the institute's findings are republished in the leading scientific journals of the United States and foreign countries. Requests for these articles have come from practicing physicians and research scientists all over the world.

"In addition to the published articles," said Dr. Meyer, "scientific presentations are made by staff members before leading local, regional and national associations of the special branches of the medical sciences.

"Lectures and clinical-pathologic conferences are given before the staffs of hospitals in and outside of Chicago, including Veterans Administration hospitals," he continued.

"Research visitors," he said, "come from all over the world to observe the work at the institute and to learn special technics developed by our staff members."

Financial Contributors

Funds for carrying on research at Hektoen Institute are being contributed by the following imposing list of donors:

United States Public Health Service
United States Army
American Cancer Society
Damon Runyon Fund
Leukemia Research Foundation
American Heart Association
Chicago Heart Association
Women's Auxiliary of Hektoen Institute
Yonnie Cohen Heart Foundation
Maurice E. Culberg Memorial Fund for Cancer Research
Oliva Sue Dvore Foundation
The Galter Foundation
Samuel Greenspan Memorial Fund for Cancer Research
Alfred O. Hergott Foundation
Bernice Berger Hirsch Memorial Foundation
The Lasdon Foundation
Dr. Julian D. Levinson Memorial Foundation
Mildred Rothschild Memorial Foundation
Otho S. A. Sprague Memorial Institute
Dr. Leonard H. and Louis D. Weissman Medical Research
Foundation
Benjamin Fishbain Hematology Research Fund
The Cummings Foundation
George M. Eisenberg Foundation
Robert L. Goldblatt Foundation
Dorothy Slutsky Memorial Club
The Smart Family Foundation

Rich and poor alike contribute what funds they can to the finding of cures for diseases that brought about the deaths of loved ones, or which perplex humanity in general. Many checks also are received by Hektoen Institute which otherwise would have gone for funeral flowers.

In soliciting research funds, Hektoen Institute says in its brochure:

"Grants made to the Hektoen Institute may be outright or continuing. They may specify a particular type of research to which they are to be applied, provided that the board of trustees and the scientific committee sanctions the project. Grants made without such specification will be distributed to further those research problems for which funds have been lacking."

An Honored Name

The institute was named in fitting honor to the celebrated Dr. Ludvig Hektoen, known in medical circles as the "father of pathology in Chicago," and further described by Dr. Meyer in the following language:

"Explorer in fundamental bacteriology, an originator in chemical research, initiator of aspects of hematology, coordinator of medical knowledge with history and social organization, foremost student and teacher of forensic medicine, notable contributor to medical literature, and correlator of the research laboratory with clinical practice."

Of Norwegian ancestry, Ludvig Hektoen was born on July 2, 1863 at Westby, Vernon county, Wisconsin. His father was a Lutheran parochial school teacher.

After attending the lower grades, Ludvig, at the age of 13, went for a year to Monona Academy (now extinct) in Madison, Wis., then to Luther college in Decorah, Iowa, where after six years, he was graduated with a bachelor of arts degree.

In 1883-84 young Hektoen took premedical courses at the University of Wisconsin, then obtained a position as attendant at the Northern Hospital for the Insane in Oshkosh, Wis. Soon thereafter he was placed in charge of the drugstore at the hospital, remaining there until the fall of 1885 when he came to Chicago.

In the booming metropolis, Hektoen attended the College of Physicians and Surgeons, graduating in 1887. He interned

A modern operating table, with powerful overhead light, County hospital, 1953.



at County hospital for two years. In 1889 he was made curator of the museum of Rush Medical College. Shortly thereafter he became registrar at County hospital, and in 1890 became a Cook county coroner's physician. (Available records are not entirely clear as to how long he held each position.)

In June of 1891 he became professor of general pathology at his alma mater, the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Chicago. Months later he went to Europe where he continued his medical studies. Returning to Chicago in 1894 he became professor of "morbid anatomy" and director of the laboratory of normal and pathologic histology, bacteriology and hygiene in Rush Medical College, which position he held for the major portion of his life.

In addition, in 1895 he became pathologist of the Cook County hospital, and in 1896, a member of the attending staff.

In 1901 Hektoen became head of the department of pathol-

ogy and bacteriology at the University of Chicago, and in 1902, director of the John McCormick Institute for Infectious Diseases.

It was in the latter capacity that Hektoen's foresight resulted in the association of the research laboratory of the McCormick Institute with clinical material at the then active Durand hospital that stood alongside.

(The McCormick Institute had been founded by Harold F. McCormick and Edith Rockefeller McCormick in memory of their son, John Rockefeller McCormick, who had died of scarlet fever.)

In a recently-published Hektoen Institute brochure, written by Ethel H. Davis, appears the illuminative statement:

"It was his (Dr. Hektoen's) inspiration that eventually led to the discovery of the cause of scarlet fever by George F. and Gladys Henry Dick." (Man and wife team of physicians.)

The depression that began in 1929 and the subsequent death of Edith Rockefeller McCormick ended the support of both McCormick Institute and the Durand hospital, and they were closed.

That was the situation in 1942 when the county board, of which Clayton F. Smith then was president, bought the two buildings, thereby giving Hektoen Institute its chance to be formed.

Dr. Hektoen, tho a staunch supporter of the new research institute that was to bear his name, was not officially connected with it. He died in 1951 at the ripe age of 89.

In addition to Dr. Meyer, chairman, other members of the institute's board of trustees are:

Dr. Morris Fishbein, vice chairman of the board at Hektoen and former editor of the Journal of the American Medical Association.

Dr. Hoffman, director, mentioned previously.

Dr. Hans Popper, director of the department of pathology, Mt. Sinai hospital, and consultant, Army Medical Center, Washington, D. C.

Dr. Frederick Steigman, associate director for clinical investigation at the institute; associate professor of medicine, University of Illinois College of Medicine.

Dr. Sinclair Howard Armstrong, Jr., consultant for clinical investigation at the institute; director of medical education, County hospital.

Dr. Aaron Arkin, professor of medicine, University of Illinois College of Medicine.

Dr. Frederick H. Falls, professor and chairman, department of obstetrics and gynecology, University of Illinois College of Medicine.

Dr. Edmund F. Foley, clinical professor of medicine, University of Illinois College of Medicine.

Dr. Andrew C. Ivy, professor of physiology, University of Illinois College of Medicine.

Dr. John B. O'Donoghue, professor of clinical surgery, Stritch School of Medicine, Loyola University.

Dr. James P. Simonds, professor emeritus, department of pathology, Northwestern University Medical School.

Dr. Arthur Colwell, chairman, department of medicine, Northwestern University Medical School.

Dr. Harry Dowling, chairman, department of medicine, University of Illinois College of Medicine.

Dr. Chester C. Guy, chief of surgery, Illinois Central hospital.

COOK COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Dan Ryan, president of the county board,¹ and Commissioners Wm. N. Erickson, Frank Bobrytzke and Charles F. Chaplin.

PUBLIC SPIRITED CITIZENS

Britton I. Budd, president, Public Service Company of Northern Illinois; Chester R. Davis, vice president, Chicago Title and Trust company; Jack Galter, president, Galter Products company; Irv Kupcinec, columnist, Chicago Sun-Times; William McFetridge, president, Building Service Employees, AFL-CIO; Guy E. Reed, vice president, Harris Trust and Savings Bank; Brig. Gen. Frank Schwengel, president, Seagram Distillers Corp.; and Ross D. Siragusa, board chairman, Admiral Corp.

The members of the Hektoen Institute working staff, in addition to the aforementioned Drs. Hoffman, Steigman and Armstrong, are:

Dr. Steven O. Schwartz, director of hematology; Alvin Dublin, director of biochemistry; Dr. Benjamin M. Gasul, director of cardiophysiology; Dr. Meyer A. Perlstein, director of neu-

1. Among the most enthusiastic Hektoen Institute supporters thruout the years have been both President Ryan and his wife, Ruby, the latter working with the women's auxiliary.

In helping conduct periodic fund-raising drives for the institute, Ryan has said:

"This institute carries on the type of research that excites men's imaginations. It already has discovered and will continue discovering things that add to the longevity and happiness of all human beings."

rology; Dr. Daniel Kushner, director of mycology; and Dr. David Bronsky, director of metabolic diseases.

Research associates on the institute's staff are Drs. Morris T. Friedell, J. de la Huerga, Morton Grossman, Donald D. Kozoll, Abraham Levinson, Louis P. River, Fenton Schaffner, Joseph Silverstein, Paul B. Szanto, William H. Schlaes, Robert F. Dillon, Maurice Lev, Egbert H. Fell, Milton Weinberg, Jr., Raymond Dern, Harold M. Schoolman, Irving A. Friedman, John R. Tobin, Richard B. Terry, and Eugene F. Traut.

Medical Martyr

One of the doctors who interned at County hospital led a brief but dramatic life. He was Howard Taylor Ricketts (1871-1910) who sacrificed his life in the cause of medicine.

Born in Findlay, Ohio, and reared in Nebraska, young Ricketts came to Chicago for his medical education, graduating from Northwestern University Medical School and interning at County hospital. Soon thereafter he became a teacher at Rush Medical College, and then the University of Chicago.

From 1906 to 1909 Dr. Ricketts studied Rocky Mountain spotted fever, discovering it to be a small bacillus transmitted to humans by ticks. Following this he went to Mexico City to investigate a typhus, known as tabardillo, which was claiming hundreds of lives.

Dr. Ricketts found the disease to be similar in some respects to spotted fever and discovered it was communicated by the body louse. He also found it could be conveyed to monkeys, in which an immunity was produced.

Near the finish of his work, Dr. Ricketts, himself, came down with the disease he was conquering, dying on May 3, 1910. In tribute to his great work, the Mexican government published his findings in book form and named after him the laboratory in which he had worked.

Dr. Frederick Tice

Medical figures who contributed immensely to the welfare of man during the first half of the current century would include the late Dr. Frederick Tice, heart and chest specialist, who was closely associated with County hospital during most of that period.

Born July 30, 1871 in Oshkosh, Wis., Dr. Tice came to Chicago for his medical training, graduating from Rush Medical college in 1894. He interned at County hospital during 1895 and 1896, and in 1902 joined the hospital staff, serving until 1937, the last eleven years of which he was staff president. During this 35-year period, he served, as do many other doctors, without compensation, depending upon his outside practice and his teaching activities for his livelihood.

He joined the teaching staff of the University of Illinois College of Medicine in 1901, becoming a full professor in 1913. This he held until 1927 when made professor emeritus.

While at County hospital he founded within the institution what was to become known as the Tice tuberculosis laboratory. In 1934 he brought to Chicago the tuberculosis vaccine that had been discovered by two French scientists and added to its further development. He also helped in the development of lung collapse therapy, and was a pioneer in the use of mobile units for tuberculosis examinations.

On May 18, 1931, Dr. Tice was appointed by the late Anton J. Cermak, Chicago mayor, as head of the Municipal Tuberculosis sanitarium, which position he held until his resignation in 1945.

When he died Dec. 14, 1953 at the age of 82, his lifelong associate and Oak Park neighbor, Dr. Ole C. Nelson, medical director at County hospital, referred to Dr. Tice as a "doctor's doctor" whom other doctors called upon when they, themselves, were ill.

Dr. Ole C. Nelson

Lore is bound to grow around the central figures who contribute to the making of such a world-renowned institution as County hospital.

Among the most colorful personalities at this great hospital was the roly-poly, pink-cheeked, friendly little man, the late Dr. Ole C. Nelson, who devoted most of his adult life to the institution, most of the time in a directing capacity.

Altogether Ole Nelson served at County hospital for 42 consecutive years, the last ten as medical director. Under his supervision some 7,000 medical men were trained, and an estimated 5,000,000 patients treated.

This great man seldom was addressed as "Dr. Nelson." Sometimes he was called "Dr. Ole," but thousands of his friends, including a hundred or more newspapermen, affectionately called him just plain "Ole."

Ole Nelson was born in Brevik, Norway, on Jan. 1, 1883. He and his brothers and sisters were brought to Chicago by their parents when Ole was still a small boy.

Being of small stature, Ole, in his teens, became a racing jockey, riding at tracks thruout the country. Then he became a business agent for other jockeys.

He first entered County hospital service on July 1, 1911 when appointed "clerk and storekeeper," according to Cook county civil service commission records.

In 1913 he was made a junior clerk, in 1916 a senior clerk, and in 1919 principal clerk.

Surrounded by great medical men who were on the hospital staff, Ole aspired to become one of them. With his clerical job providing a living, meager as it was, he attended night medical school and at odd hours picked up additional medical knowledge as he saw it practiced in the hospital.

In June of 1921, at the age of 38, Ole was graduated from

the Chicago Medical College, earning his degree in neurology. During 1921 and 1922 he interned at County hospital, then remained on the staff as a doctor.

In June of 1927 he was appointed assistant medical "warden" (director) in charge at night. On May 16, 1943, he was appointed medical director, which position he held until his retirement on June 30, 1953. He died Jan. 16, 1954 at the age of 71.

As assistant, and then director, Ole Nelson's work was varied. He was an administrator and he was a doctor. Always traveling at a fast little walk, he tramped miles every day down the long corridors and thru the over-crowded wards.

Never losing site of the purpose for which County hospital had been created—administering to the sick-poor—Ole often would stop at bedsides of the seriously ill and the depressed. He knew that a reassuring smile and a friendly word to a scared, distressed patient often was as therapeutic as a pill.

That his love for County hospital exceeded all else was demonstrated many times. One such occasion was during the depth of the depression of the 1930s when the financially-harassed county board was far behind in its payments of bills, including those for vital drugs used at County hospital.

With the drug companies threatening to cut off further supplies, Ole Nelson, out of his personal funds, paid the most pressing of these drug bills, thus averting possible disaster at the hospital. (In due time, of course, the county reimbursed and thanked Ole.)

During this long climb from the bottom to the top, Ole lived a full and complete life. Having married a registered nurse, Myrtle Kinsman, who was practicing at County hospital, he enjoyed a happy home life, the last several years of which were spent in their residence at 147 LeMoyne parkway, Oak Park.

The Nelson's two children (son, William G., and daughter,

Jean) and the Nelson grandchildren were a continuing source of pleasure to Ole. He especially liked to take all of them with him on his vacations when he would go on northwoods fishing trips.

To balance the effects that so much pain and death must have upon one when he works in a hospital, Ole always maintained a lighter side, enjoyed a joke, and was a good hand at creating one himself.

One of Ole's bits of humor once appeared in newspapers thruout the country. It originated with him on a Wisconsin fishing trip when he reported his successful catches were due to the use of benzedrine in his live-bait box.

He said the drug not only made fishing-worms more lively and attractive to fish, but that when he sprinkled some of it on a soft-shelled crab, the crab became so "hopped-up" that after being lowered into the water on a hook, it reached out, grabbed a big bass by the nose, and held on until the fish was netted. The crab repeated the act until Ole had his limit catch.

Further along this lighter line, there appeared in the Chicago Daily News of Dec. 14, 1943 the following account:

"Dr. Ole C. Nelson, medical director of County hospital, has never ceased marveling at the speedy coverage of Chicago newspapers ever since the day, a few years ago, he was telephoned by an excited nurse, screaming: 'A patient just jumped out a window.' Dr. Nelson hung up and moved toward the door. A second later the phone rang again. It was the City News Bureau. 'What was the name of the patient who jumped?' a reporter asked. 'How should I know?' shouted Nelson. 'The body just passed the fourth floor!'"

Dr. George C. Blaha

The present medical director of County hospital is Dr. George C. Blaha, appointed July 1, 1953 following the retirement of Dr. Ole C. Nelson.

Dr. Blaha, a bachelor who devotes practically all of his waking hours to his job, was born in Chicago on October 31, 1912. After graduation from the University of Notre Dame in 1934 where he had taken a pre-medical course, majoring in chemistry, young Blaha attended the University of Illinois Medical school, graduating in 1938. (While a medical student he helped finance himself by working for two summers as a laborer in the Cook county forest preserves.)

On July 1, 1939 the young doctor began his internship at County hospital and has remained with the institution continuously. Specializing in internal medicine, he became a resident physician on July 2, 1940, serving as such until July 2, 1942 when appointed executive resident physician.

During the succeeding eleven years, while associated closely with both Dr. Nelson and Dr. Karl A. Meyer, the latter as medical superintendent of all Cook county institutions, Dr. Blaha became so steeped in proper hospital medical procedure that his appointment as medical director was a "natural" when that position became vacant.

Dr. Blaha is of large physical stature, as contrasted with Dr. Nelson's small makeup, but aside from that, their traits of friendliness and efficiency are much the same.

Dr. Karl A. Meyer

As the world enters the age for conquering outer space, it seems fitting to record here that one man in Cook county, Karl A. Meyer, has rocketed and remained aloft in the firmament of medicine longer than any other Illinois man in this 20th century.

Famed as a surgeon, teacher, hospital administrator, and benefactor of human kind in many other ways, Dr. Meyer has been associated with official Cook county medical affairs continuously since the county board appointed him as medical superintendent of County hospital on April 6, 1914. Presently



The Dr. Karl A. Meyer Hall, dormitory for interns and resident doctors, with the Cook County School of Nursing residence in background at left.



Great doctors connected with County hospital. The world-famous Dr. Karl A. Meyer, upper left, now medical superintendent of all Cook county institutions, and the late Dr. Frederick Tice, heart and chest specialist. Lower left, Dr. Samuel J. Hoffman, director of Hektoen Institute for Medical Research, and the late Dr. Ole C. Nelson, long-time medical director at County hospital. (See text for accounts of their accomplishments.)

he is medical superintendent of all Cook county institutions.

"Without Karl Meyer, Cook county could not have attained and sustained the outstanding position it has enjoyed in the treatment accorded its destitute sick," Daniel Ryan, president of the county board, said recently.

Dr. Meyer was born Sept. 28, 1886 at Gilman, Ill., son of German immigrants. His father was a combination furniture dealer and undertaker. At the age of eight, young Karl was permitted by his father to accompany the local doctors in their horse-drawn buggies on country visits.

Upon completion of his elementary and high school training in the public schools of Gilman, the youth attended the University of Illinois College of Medicine (at Chicago) where he was graduated in 1908 at the head of his class.

Interned At County Hospital

Between 1908 and 1910 he interned at County hospital, then went to Wichita, Kansas to begin his medical practice. He remained there two years, during which time he was closely associated with Dr. D. W. Baskam, a noted surgeon of the great southwest.

From Kansas Dr. Meyer went to LeGrand, Oregon, where, for slightly more than a year, he was superintendent and chief surgeon at the Hot Lake Sanatorium.

Returning to Chicago in 1913, Dr. Meyer practiced medicine at the old North Chicago hospital as a resident surgeon until the aforementioned date (April 6, 1914) when he was appointed medical superintendent of County hospital after having scored highest in a civil service examination.

Besides being superintendent, Dr. Meyer on Feb. 2, 1920 was appointed as a medical staff surgeon at County hospital, which classification he has retained to the present day.

On Dec. 1, 1939, Dr. Meyer was elevated to the newly-created post of medical superintendent of all Cook county institutions. As such he maintains medical supervision over

County hospital, Oak Forest hospital, Arthur J. Audy Home for Children (formerly known as the juvenile detention home), and county jail.

In addition to being on the surgical staff at County hospital, Dr. Meyer is the chief surgeon at Columbus hospital, and at one time or another has served on the surgical staffs of the following Chicago hospitals:

Henrotin, Wesley Memorial, St. Luke's, Grant, Illinois Masonic, the old University Hospital of Illinois, and the aforementioned old North Chicago hospital.

Long A Professor Of Surgery

For years Dr. Meyer was on the teaching staff of his alma mater, the University of Illinois College of Medicine, serving as professor of surgery, and for a quarter of a century—from 1926 to 1951—was a professor of surgery at the Northwestern University Medical School. (Since 1951 he has had emeritus rating at Northwestern.)

In his busy life, Dr. Meyer has been active in many civic and medical affairs. He was elected as a member of the board of trustees of the University of Illinois in 1932, serving until 1950. He was president of the board one year.

On Jan. 20, 1950 Governor Adlai E. Stevenson appointed Dr. Meyer to the Medical Center Commission where he still serves as vice-president. This seven-member commission, which serves without pay, has been instrumental in creating and maintaining what generally is considered the world's greatest medical center on Chicago's West Side, an area that includes County hospital. Within this center public and private hospitals, research institutions, medical colleges, and nurses' training schools are in close proximity to one another.

Since January of 1955 Dr. Meyer has served as president of the Chicago Foundlings Home, oldest of its kind in the middle west, having been founded in 1869. It is an institution that cares for abandoned children and unwed mothers and

their babies until such time as they can be fitted properly into normal society. In 1957 Dr. Meyer lead a campaign which raised funds for a new home for the institution. The new home, located at 1720 W. Polk st., was completed in 1959 and dedicated Jan. 31, 1960. The old home had been at 15 S. Wood st.

Dr. Meyer was one of the founders and is president of the Cook County Graduate School of Medicine, now at 707 S. Wood st. This school, which offers refresher courses to some 2,000 doctors annually, was founded in 1932 by 18 doctors on the staff of County hospital. They donated \$100 each and rented an old building at Honore and Congress streets to house the project. The new, three-story building which now houses the school cost \$500,000 and was dedicated in June of 1952 with Dr. Meyer and County Commissioner Wm. N. Erickson presiding. Erickson at that time was president of the county board.

This graduate school is a private institution not supported by taxation nor by any university. With a staff of 125 doctors, including Meyer, himself, it is said to carry the largest load of post graduates in the world. All doctors need such refresher courses to learn the latest in medical developments, Dr. Meyer repeatedly has pointed out.

Much of Dr. Meyer's time and interest is devoted to the affairs of the afore-mentioned Hektoen Institute For Medical Research of the Cook County Hospital. He is chairman of its board of trustees.

How he can find time for the private practice of medicine is almost a mystery, but Dr. Meyer maintains an office at 30 N. Michigan ave. His hours there, however, are limited to three short afternoons per week.

In 1957 Dr. Meyer was elected president of the Chicago Medical Society, an honor that gave a somewhat ironical twist to a situation that arose just prior to June 11, 1938. That was the date that the American Medical Association, with which

the Chicago Medical Society is associated, dropped County hospital from its accredited list for intern training because Dr. Meyer, as its medical superintendent, refused to exclude as interns the graduates of the Chicago Medical School which did not at that time have a Class A rating with the A. M. A. (The Chicago Medical School, which later became associated with the Mt. Sinai hospital, has enjoyed Class A rating by the A. M. A. since 1948.)

Dr. Meyer vigorously insisted that the county should continue to accept the Chicago Medical School graduates as interns, not only because of an intern shortage, but he also pointed out that the school even then was fully accredited by the state of Illinois, and that its graduates, after internship, could legally practice within the state.

The dispute eventually was resolved in compromise fashion. The school's graduates who then were interning at County hospital were permitted to finish their internship with full credit, and the county ceased accepting more such graduates until the school acquired the rating demanded by the A. M. A. With that, County hospital was returned to the accredited list on Dec. 10, 1939. Dr. Meyer, meanwhile, had been elevated to his new post of medical superintendent of all county institutions, and the A. M. A. soon forgot that it ever had argued with the distinguished man.

Always A Public Figure

Dr. Meyer never has been out of the limelight from the time he was graduated at the head of his class in medical college. (Even in dozens of written medical examinations he has taken, down to the present time, he always has rated first, according to civil service records.)

Altho aggressive in fighting for what he believes right, Dr. Meyer never has been self-seeking. That one reads so much about him is because of his accomplishments. People and jobs seek him out, and publicity follows automatically.

One occasion on which Dr. Meyer made front page news came in 1933 when, by auto and plane, he sped to the bedside and personally attended Chicago's mortally wounded mayor, Anton J. Cermak, in Miami, Florida. Cermak, who had been president of the Cook county board of commissioners from 1922 until his election as mayor in 1932, had been struck down by an assassin's bullet meant for President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Wide publicity again came to Dr. Meyer in December of that same year (1933) when he performed what many men in medical circles said was the first successful operation of its kind. In an operating room at County hospital he removed in its entirety the stomach of a patient. It was attributed a success because the patient, a man, lived in comparatively good health for seven additional years, his body depending upon the small intestine to do the work of the missing stomach. The man would have lived longer, doctors said, had he not taken a fatal drink of antiseptic while intoxicated.

Because of his recognized standing, his ability to express himself well upon any occasion, and his ready command of pertinent facts, Dr. Meyer has enjoyed deep influence in all causes he has championed.

Members of the Cook county board know he is giving it to them straight when he says additional funds are needed for hospital improvements; state legislators follow his recommendations when he urges improvements in state mental and tuberculosis institutions; private groups respond to his appeals in behalf of private charities; medical students and fellow doctors hang onto his every word when he talks of medical practices. The policies at the University of Illinois, Northwestern University, and other great institutes of learning not only reflect but actually are a corporate part of Dr. Karl A. Meyer.

Forces that would oppose any of Dr. Meyer's ideas have

learned that if they are to meet with any degree of success they must indulge themselves in behind-the-scenes maneuvers. They know that this man, who is slightly on the smallish side in physical stature, will best them convincingly in open, sense-making debate.

Dr. Meyer has traveled widely, especially in Europe. Always alert to medical practices, he has brought home and instituted at County hospital any improvements found elsewhere in either medical techniques or hospital facilities.

A determined foe of smoking or drinking, Dr. Meyer has maintained rigid control over such at the institutions he superintends. There is an oft-quoted saying at County hospital when a patient or an on-duty hospital employe sneaks a forbidden smoke that he had "better not let Dr. Meyer find out about this."

Hands That Save Lives

The rich, when they can obtain his services, pay well for Dr. Meyer's ministrations. Many thousands of others — the destitute "nobodies" who likewise are human beings—owe prolongation of their lives to this man's expert knowledge and deft hands. More than likely many of this latter group did not even know that of the half-dozen, white-uniformed, white-masked figures hovering over them in the operating room it was Dr. Meyer who performed the operation that saved their lives.

Dr. Meyer's fame as a surgeon came early in his career, and the succeeding years enhanced it. On Jan. 22, 1927 Torrey Stearns wrote in the Chicago Daily News that Dr. Meyer "might have been an artist, a great pianist, or a distinguished dramatic actor . . . had he so willed."

Stearns dwelt at length upon the subject of Dr. Meyer's hands, saying they "show a depth of expression and a sensitive delicateness which is called rare." He said also:

"Dr. Meyer's hands, which perform hundreds of major oper-

ations annually, were photographed and shown to a prominent nonprofessional student of palmistry who, without knowing her subject, marveled at the even balance and power of expression they show him to have." Stearns quoted the palmist as saying:

"The man is very practical and logical, well balanced, even tempered and intellectual. He has great energy, but remarkable self-control. His hand is of the square or useful type, which shows him to be possessed of extreme perseverance, which may even become stubbornness . . . he has vision and ability to carry out his ideas. His hands must almost talk when he works, so sensitive and expressive are they. He must have a light but firm touch and his nerves surely are wonderfully controlled."

There are many facets to Dr. Meyer's full life. One is reflected by his taking into his own home Sven Swenson, a talented painter of note. That was in November of 1930 after Swenson had fainted on a Chicago street and had been taken to County hospital for recovery.

Feeling compassion for the 70-year-old, homeless man, Dr. Meyer made him a virtual member of the Meyer household, even constructing a studio for him. Swenson lived with the Meyer family three years, paying for his keep by giving painting lessons to the three Meyer children. Dr. Meyer's wife, Fay, already was an accomplished painter, herself. (Mrs. Meyer died in 1956.)

Down On The Farm

As a diverting hobby and as a place for leisurely escape from his high-tension life, Dr. Meyer maintains four farms, totaling 1,365 acres, near his boyhood home of Gilman. One is a 330-acre farm, four miles east of the town. It is called Kamlake, the first three letters of the name being the Meyer initials. There, in addition to maintaining a herd of 125 Holstein milk cows and other pedigreed livestock, Dr. Meyer has established a bird and fish sanctuary. Dr. Meyer bought his

farm lands early in the depression years of the 1930s.

The Meyer home is at 215 Prospect ave., Highland Park, in Lake county, just north of Cook county. But when he feels the need for a really relaxing week-end, Dr. Meyer slips away to his "good earth" holdings down in Iroquois county, 86 miles south of Chicago.

Because Karl A. Meyer is known thruout the state for his abilities as a surgeon, hospital administrator, medical teacher, member of the board of trustees of the University of Illinois, medical center commission director, proponent of better state mental and tuberculosis institutions, friend of the farmer, and for his capacity to get things done, leaders of the Democratic party are known to have asked him in 1944 and subsequent election years if he would be their candidate for governor of the state of Illinois.

In turning them down, Dr. Meyer's stock answer has continued to be: "Thank you kindly, but my profession is that of a doctor of medicine."

Other Noted Doctors

In addition to previously-mentioned doctors of note who interned or served as staff members (oftentimes both) at Cook County hospital, and who also became outstanding teachers in medical schools, there are hundreds of others in the same category who are deserving of far more than passing notice. In this brief treatise, however, we can mention but a few more, and then principally by name only. These would include:

William T. Belfield, "father of urology;" Peter Bassoe, expert in neurology; Arthur Curtis, University of Wisconsin football star and for years head of the department of gynecology at Northwestern University Medical School; Charles Davison, professor of surgery at the University of Illinois College of Medicine.

Arthur R. Edwards, once dean of Northwestern University School of Medicine; E. F. Ingalls, a leader in the field of eye, ear, nose and throat diseases and inventor of apparatus used in their treatment; Dallas B. Phemister, for 25 years head of the department of surgery at the University of Chicago's School of Medicine.

Vernon David, professor of surgery at Rush Medical College (Rush was absorbed by the University of Illinois College of Medicine in 1941); Frederick G. Harris, for years head of the department of dermatology at Northwestern University School of Medicine; Sumney Roch, professor of surgery at Northwestern; Dean D. Lewis, left the staff at County to become associated with Johns Hopkins University.

The late Raymond W. McNealy, famed surgeon who was on the staff at County hospital from the time of his internship there in 1910 until his death on July 29, 1958. He also was the chief surgeon for years and the first superintendent at Wesley Memorial hospital, which institution he helped design.

The list of celebrated doctors who interned and practiced at County hospital continues with Michael Mason, professor of surgery at Northwestern; and Edwin M. Miller, famous children's disease specialist who taught at Rush Medical College and later was on the staff at Presbyterian hospital.

Roswell Park, following County hospital internship in 1876, established himself at Buffalo, N. Y. and operated on President McKinley when the latter was mortally wounded by an assassin's bullet on Sept. 6, 1901. Park later became head of the surgery department at the University of Buffalo.

Harry M. Richter, professor of surgery at Northwestern; A. K. Steele, professor of surgery at the University of Illinois Medical college; Weller Van Hook, famous surgery teacher at Northwestern; Roger T. Vaughan, night superintendent at County hospital for 30 years.

Other famous doctors, both in the past and present, who

interned at County hospital and served on its staff include William Fox, Lewis L. McArthur, Byron C. Meacher, Albert E. Halstead, Joseph B. DeLee, James B. Herrick, George H. Weaver, Noble M. Jones, Arthur Dunn, Bertram W. Sippy, Marshall Davison, Frederick A. Besley, William R. Cubbins, Harry Culver, Daniel N. Eisendrath, M. L. Harris, Frank Pfifer, Charles J. Rowan, Kellogg Speed, Theodore Ticken, and Peter A. Rosi.

Before leaving County hospital, one should consider again the part the members of the board of commissioners of Cook county play in its operation. The answer is simple. They run the institution. The law places the responsibility for its successful operation squarely on their shoulders.

Of course they appoint such men as Dr. Karl A. Meyer, Dr. George C. Blaha, and Warden Fred A. Hertwig, outstanding experts in their fields, to manage the institution and give the board members sound advice in charting its future. But the commissioners, themselves, constantly are in touch with hospital affairs. They know as they go along what needs to be done here and there to maintain and improve the hospital:

Chain Of Responsibility

There is a direct chain of responsibility for hospital supervision within the board, itself. Ultimate decisions must be made by the board as a whole, with the president, because of his position, having an important voice in all matters. (At this writing, the board's president is Daniel Ryan. Preceding him was William N. Erickson, and before that, Clayton F. Smith, the latter two still serving as board members.)

Hospital matters sometimes are brought directly to the board first, then referred to its public service committee, of which all 15 commissioners are members. Commissioner Frank Bobrytzke currently is the committee's chairman. A sub-committee under the public service committee is the smaller County hospital committee, of which the late Commissioner Arthur

X. Elrod most recently was chairman. Preceding Elrod as chairman was Commissioner John J. Touhy.

When hospital matters are presented at board level, they go down thru the committees for recommendations, then back to the board again for final action. At other times they originate in the committees themselves and work their way up to the board.

Altho all commissioners are free at all times to visit County hospital for first-hand information—and most of them do visit it with great frequency—Commissioners Touhy and Elrod as hospital committee chairmen, spent many hours at the institution each week, conferring with department heads and inspecting hospital facilities.

Persons who were conversant with county board matters back during the depression years of the 1930s when money was scarce and the emphasis was on retrenchment, recall how Commissioner Bobrytzke saved the county taxpayers a large sum of money.

At that time certain elements which since have passed from the picture were insisting that an older wing of one of the buildings at County hospital was "about to fall down" and would have to be replaced "immediately."

As chairman of the hospital committee at the time, and acquainted with construction work because, among other accomplishments, he was a builder, Bobrytzke climbed many feet into the air on an extension ladder one gusty day for a closer inspection. The building, he found, was sound, except that a roof gutter was loose and rattling. He had the gutter repaired at little cost and then admonished: "Don't try to fool the commissioners again."

Another extremely important board committee that has directly to do with County hospital as well as with all other county functions is the committee on finance, of which Commissioner John J. Duffy is chairman. Thoroly conversant with

hospital affairs, even down to surprisingly minute details, Duffy sees to it that the county gets the most out of its limited spending monies.

Duffy often has been heard to say:

"We board members know as well or probably better than others what we need most in the way of improvements at our county charitable institutions, including salary adjustments for employes, but we always are faced with the problem of trying to raise sufficient revenues to meet added responsibilities that the state legislature, in particular, continues to place upon the county."

President Ryan, who in 1960 had been on the county board over 33 years, repeatedly has emphasized that public support always is necessary if major hospital improvements are to be made.

"It may come as a surprise to many that even during a period of prosperity, Cook county has had thrust upon it more and more destitutes and near-destitutes who require hospital care," Ryan has stated. "It is not enough that we elected officials merely call attention to a pressing situation. We must have public support when major improvements are to be made at our institutions. For years the over-crowding at County hospital has forced us to bed some patients in the corridors.

"We point with justifiable pride to the accomplishments at our great County hospital, but at the same time we always welcome the constructive criticisms that are essential if we are to get the public behind us when it comes to providing more money."

All Chicago newspapers, at one time or another, have helped the county in securing additional improvement funds by conducting their own investigations and publishing the facts, Ryan declared.

The "Misery Harbor" Series

One occasion, Ryan remembered, was in February and March

of 1936 when the Chicago Times (now Sun-Times) printed its "Misery Harbor" series of articles in which Frank Smith, a reporter, wrote vividly of conditions at County hospital.¹



FRANK SMITH

This prompted Clayton F. Smith, then board president, to appoint a citizens committee to look into the hospital situation. The committee's report, submitted after a year's study, included recommendations that were strikingly similar, even in wording, to those made by the newspaper. Major physical improvements at County hospital followed, even tho money still was scarce because the depression had not yet ended.

Another was the series printed by the Chicago Tribune during March of 1955 in which Reporter Robert Wiedrich graphically described County hospital conditions, both good and bad.

This added to the mounting pressure for improvements, as did other analytical stories written by Edward D. "Dynamite" Sokol of the Chicago American, Thomas Buck and Ray Quisno of the Tribune, and Joe Weresch, Robert Herguth, and Jack Lind of the Chicago Daily News.

Other newspaper reporters whose writings at one time or another within recent years have contributed to improvements at County hospital have been Robert Rankin of the Sun-Times, Marjorie Minsk, Pearl Rubins and Sy Adelman of the City News Bureau, and the modest (?) author of this history who

1. Frank Smith, 56, famed reporter and war correspondent, died Jan. 10, 1960, shortly after this history had gone to press. This historian, feeling keenly the loss of a close personal friend and former newspaper cohort, was glad he had shown Smith, in advance, the manuscript of this book. Always appreciative, Frank thanked the author for the above mention.

has covered County affairs for some 28 years as a reporter for the City News Bureau and the original Chicago Sun, and later as public relations director for the county board.

Nor should one fail to mention the science writers, such as Roy Gibbons of the Tribune, Robert S. Kleckner of the Sun-Times, and Arthur J. Snider of the News. Late in 1958, in fact, Snider carried a series of articles on Psychopathic hospital, which is a division of County hospital.

The Snider articles were proclaimed by many, including President Ryan and Dr. Vladimir G. Urse, superintendent at Psychopathic, as being "constructive and exceptionally well written." An outgrowth of the Snider series was the renaming of the Psychopathic hospital.

On Feb. 2, 1959, the county board adopted a resolution introduced by President Ryan, changing the institution's name



Recuperating from illnesses, these young patients at Children's hospital (division of County hospital) are happy to be entertained by their visitor, Fran Allison of radio and TV fame.

to the Cook County Hospital Mental Health Clinic. The Ryan resolution explained:

"A definite social consciousness and awareness of the unfavorable connotation which attaches to the present name of the hospital has developed in recent years, and has led to the general thought and feeling that a much better public reaction would be obtained if the name were changed."

New Outpatient Clinic

Among immediate plans for County hospital improvements, to be paid for with proceeds from the sale of the 1957 bond issue of \$12,800,000, is a four-story, new Fantus outpatient clinic.

Costing an estimated \$3,500,000 when fully equipped, it will provide for 400,000 outpatient visits a year and will replace the present, outmoded and inadequate Fantus clinic (519 S. Wolcott st.) which provides but 200,000 outpatient visits annually. Contracts for construction of the new building were awarded by the county board on April 28, 1959, work was to start immediately, and the structure was expected to be completed within about 18 months.

Its plans (see accompanying picture) were drawn by Richard W. Prendergast, county architect, following many conferences with President Ryan, Warden Fred Hertwig of County hospital, and Dr. Karl A. Meyer, medical superintendent of all county institutions.

The building will have its entrance at 621 S. Winchester ave., altho one wing of the L-shaped structure will face on Harrison st., one-half block west of the main building at County hospital.

"Outpatients," Ryan explained, "are the destitute ill who are in need of medical treatment, but who are not sufficiently ill to be accorded bed space in our always overcrowded County hospital."



Architect's sketch of forthcoming new Fantus Outpatient Clinic for County hospital, expected to be completed by late 1960.

The clinic is named in honor of the celebrated Dr. Bernard Fantus, now deceased, who, as a County hospital doctor, in 1937 established at the hospital the first blood bank in America.

Recently another project of magnitude was being propounded. The medical staff at County hospital recommended a new, \$5,000,000 laboratory for County hospital. Dr. Meyer, proposing it, said:

"We, as one of the great teaching hospitals, need such a laboratory. Otherwise we could become a second rate hospital. If we are going to stand in the vanguard of progressive medicine, we must have better laboratory facilities."

Dr. Meyer said the laboratory could be built on the site of the old McCormick building on Wood street, across from County hospital's main building. The McCormick structure, county owned, comprises a portion of the Hektoen research institute. Hektoen, Dr. Meyer said, would not suffer because plans are afoot to enlarge the Durand building portion of the institute with privately collected funds.

County hospital, at present, uses county morgue facilities as

a research laboratory, but these over-crowded quarters are needed by the coroner for autopsies, some 600 of which are performed yearly in suspected criminal cases.

"The coroner actually should perform from 3,000 to 4,000 autopsies a year," Dr. Meyer declared. "We do not know but what a few of the deaths, now written off as natural causes, were actually criminal."

President Ryan said that if the proposed laboratory is to be constructed, its cost must be borne from the proceeds of a future bond issue, yet to be submitted to the voters for approval.¹

Consultant Retained

In August of 1958 the county board retained Julian W. Baer, personnel management consultant, who resides in Evanston, to make job studies at the Cook County School of Nursing, and later directed him to make similar studies at County hospital.

Early in 1959 it was indicated that Baer, with a small staff, might eventually be assigned to make similar studies at Oak Forest hospital and possibly in all other county institutions and departments. If the Baer group makes a complete job reclassification thruout the county, the study could take three or four years, it was said.

In explaining the retention of Baer, Commissioner John J. Duffy, chairman of the board's finance committee, stated:

"Cook county's activities have grown to such enormous proportions that an elected commissioner no longer has time to properly analyze the thousands of detailed operations within departments. We need studies and specific reports and recommendations to guide us in establishing policies of conduct and in preparing our annual budgets."

1. An additional \$9,500,000 in County hospital improvement bonds was approved at public referendum Nov. 3, 1959, thereby assuring construction of the laboratory, together with other needed improvements.

As a further aid in this activity the county board, in adopting its 1959 corporate (housekeeping) budget, created a budgetary division within the county comptroller's office.

This new division, costing \$70,000 the first year, and employing a staff of 10 budget analysts and other personnel, was to be under the able direction of Chief Deputy County Comptroller Charles R. Hodgman.

Working in conjunction with the Baer group, it was to supply detailed information of all types to the finance committee which prepares the county's annual budgets.

Creation of the budgetary division met with the approval of the Civic Federation, watchdog over public expenditures.

"This group can perform a service greatly needed by the county," declared Joseph V. O'Neil, director of public relations for the federation.

O'Neil, sometimes termed by board members as the county's "sixteenth commissioner," recommended, however, that the division at some future date be placed directly under the supervision of the president of the county board rather than under the comptroller.



C. R. (DICK) HODGMAN
Deputy County Comptroller

The Illinois Training School For Nurses and

The Cook County School Of Nursing

Prior to 1880 County hospital nurses, mostly untrained, were selected at random and nursing service was poor. That year, however, the board of commissioners of Cook county authorized the newly formed Illinois Training School for

Nurses to use County hospital facilities in the training of nurses and, in return, the school was to supply the nursing staff for the hospital. This the school did until September of 1929 when it transferred its properties and records to the University of Chicago and discontinued operating as a school.

Successor to The Illinois Training School for Nurses was the present Cook County School of Nursing. Relationship of this School of Nursing to County hospital is somewhat unique. The school is operated by a board of 36 directors, all outstanding citizens who donate their services.

Each year the board of commissioners of Cook county contracts with the school's board of directors for the school to furnish the nursing service for County hospital, and the county, in turn, appropriates the money with which to operate and maintain the school, the Nurses Residence, and pay the salaries of all employed by the school.

The 1959 appropriation for this purpose was \$10,351,563 and the number employed by the school was 2361.

Annual budget hearings conducted by the county board's finance committee, of which Commissioner John J. Duffy is chairman, in the past have been marked by lengthy and sometimes heated debates in which representatives of the school plead for greatly increased appropriations. The county commissioners, while granting increases that are absolutely necessary to meet rising costs, always point out that it is the taxpayers' money they are spending, and there is a limit to what taxpayers can afford.

The result at times has been an uneasy truce, but the school continues to operate and supply excellent nursing service, and its able administrators manage in friendly fashion to "make do" with the funds appropriated.

Executive director of the school is Robert S. Petersen. Miss Frances L. A. Powell is in charge of nursing service and nursing education. O. H. Ehrhardt, Jr. is business manager.

In 1959 the members of the school's board of directors were:

Helmer A. Melum, president
Edwin C. Austin (PP)
Stuart S. Ball
Hamilton K. Beebe
Brownell T. Bradstreet
Robert J. Bushelle
Mrs. William B. Campbell
Philip R. Clarke, Jr.
Mrs. Thomas R. Coyne
Mrs. John Dern
Mrs. H. C. Dormitzer
Fletcher M. Durbin
Anthony Eastman
Mrs. N. Maury Goodloe (AM)
Mrs. Joseph O. Hanson
Fred A. Hertwig (AM)
Edwin R. Keeler (PP)
Alfred D. Kohn
Mrs. Bruce MacLeish

Virgil Martin
John J. McDonough
George B. McKibbin (PP)
Dr. Karl A. Meyer
Mrs. John Nash Ott, Jr.
Ross I. Parker
Mrs. Graham Penfield (PP)
Charles A. Rovetta (PP)
Dr. H. N. Sanford
Warren F. Sarle
Arthur W. Schultz
Albert L. Seidel (PP)
R. J. Spaeth
Walter F. Straub
Mrs. Frank Sulzberger
Reuben Thorson
Mrs. Ernest B. Tomlinson
Miss Zella von Grep
Mrs. Frances B. Watkins

Note: PP denotes past president, HM, honorary member, and AM, associate member.

Because both the Illinois Training School for Nurses and its successor, the Cook County School of Nursing, have played such an important part in the successful operation of County hospital, this chapter concerning the world's largest hospital would not be complete without a brief history of these notable schools.

For this account we are indebted to Miss Mary E. Reglin, a divisional administrator of the Cook County School of Nursing of which she was a 1935 graduate.

Miss Reglin gathered most of her facts while obtaining her master of arts degree in nursing education at the University of Chicago in 1952. Her account was publicized in mimeograph form by the Cook County School of Nursing when that institution celebrated in 1955 the 25th anniversary of its founding.

We do not personally vouch for the correctness of Miss Reglin's account, but it bears all the earmarks of authenticity and is well done. Having obtained Miss Reglin's kind permission, we are happy to reproduce the principal portions of her manuscript. They follow:

The Illinois Training School For Nurses 1880 - 1929

The history of this School has been told completely and most interestingly by a graduate of the Class of 1891, Mrs. Grace Fay Schryver, in her book *A History of the Illinois Training School for Nurses*. The reading of that book should be a must for every graduate of that School. And all those persons in the medical and allied fields associated with Cook County Hospital from 1881 on will find the history an enlightening and entertaining account of accomplishments and vicissitudes of the School and of its success measured in terms of the activities of its graduates and the value of the School's contribution to the care of patients in Cook County Hospital.

The Illinois Training School was created through the efforts of a small group of civic-minded women who recognized the need for the city of Chicago to provide skilled nursing service to the community. That group, ably abetted by the interested efforts of other prominent citizens, obtained a charter from the State of Illinois, September 15, 1880, for "The Illinois Training School for Nurses" with the stated purpose—" . . . to train skilled nurses and furnish them to the sick or wounded."

The first problem was to gain use of some of the wards in the hospital for a practice field. The County Commissioners were very cool to the suggestion; the warden quite opposed. The ladies of the Board created an Advisory Board of prominent business and professional men and through the efforts of one of the new members, Dr. DeLaskie Miller, obtained the endorsement of the Chicago Medical Society. Dr. D. A. K. Steele, Dr. Christian Fenger and Dr. S. O. Jacobson of the hospital Medical Staff were invited to join the Advisory Board—and did so.

This is a portion of the letter from the Board of Managers sent to the Cook County Commissioners.

"To the Honourable Board of Commissioners of Cook County Gentlemen:

"For the benefit of those (members of the Hospital Committee) opposed, and in order that we may stand rightly

before your Board we would like to state explicitly what would be our attitude towards those in authority already there.

"We should come in with the expectation of creating for your use in the hospital, a better corps of nurses than those you already have.

"As there seems to be some opposition to our entering the male wards, we will content ourselves with a female medical ward and a female surgical. In those wards, your warden himself admits that the nurses now employed are indifferent and inefficient. We would substitute for those, skilled nurses, if you give us the opportunity of training them in those wards. We will pledge ourselves to be governed by the laws already established in the Hospital, and to conform to all its rules. Our Superintendent shall be subordinate to your Warden in all matters pertaining to hospital rule, and we bind ourselves to be a peaceable, and not a disturbing element in the order prevailing there.

"With regard to the appointing power of nurses, we must claim that power in reference to our own students. We are proposing to build up a system for training skilled nurses that will greatly benefit not only Cook County Hospital but the City of Chicago itself. In doing so we assume a great responsibility. It is but fair and reasonable then that we select for ourselves the material to be used. Applications will come to us from various sources, and those young women presented to our notice by any of your Honorable Board, or by the Warden of the Hospital, shall receive especial consideration. But we must not be made to accept applicants of whom our judgment disapproves we must reserve to ourselves the power of deciding in our own school what applicants shall be received on probation We regard this as the key to the entire situation, and we must yield it to none if we would make our plan a success"

1880 In December Ward A in Pavilion 2 (a female surgical) and Ward C in Pavilion 3 (male medical) were granted the School.

First superintendent Mary E. Brown was called from the Bellevue Training School where she had

been Assistant Superintendent. Thus was launched the Illinois Training School—first nurses training school West of Buffalo.

Since the Commissioners agreed to pay the School that first year only what the former, untrained attendants received, the Board of Managers had to seek funds from their own group, other Civic and philanthropic organizations to pay salaries, purchase housing, etc. Moneys accrued to the Board those first ten years from such sources and from a modest bond issue and from the School conducting nursing services in other hospitals. The County paid no more than fifty dollars per ward—in fact \$850.00 for ten wards, which could in no manner support the School.

1882 Letters of commendation for nursing services given to patients were sent to the Second Annual Board Meeting by such staff doctors as Moses Gunn, Ralph N. Ishom, Charles Adams, D. A. K. Steele, Christian Fenger, and an especially grateful letter from Warden J. H. Dixon.

1885 The Illinois Training School furnished nursing service to Presbyterian Hospital and the Illinois Training School students thereby received experience in a private hospital. In all the Illinois Training School operated Presbyterian Hospital nursing service for eighteen years.

1891 First annual contract signed between the Cook County Commissioners and the Board of Managers of the Illinois Training School.

1892 Illinois Training School received a \$50,000 legacy from the John Crerar estate. They used some of the money to establish a Charity Nursing fund—to give private duty care at home to patients without funds.

1893 The Cook County Hospital opened a wing for Contagious diseases and in 1894 asked the Illinois Training School to take over the care of patients.

1893 The Illinois Training School participated in exhibiting a model hospital during the Columbian Exposition. At the close of the Fair the Illinois Women's

- Exposition Board presented the School with much of the equipment, thus giving the Illinois Training School its first complete and modern diet kitchen for teaching.
- 1896 Three year course was adopted. From the first the curriculum had been of the foremost for nursing schools of the time with heavy emphasis on the physical and biological sciences.
- 1900 Post-graduate courses of study and experience were offered to graduate nurses.
- 1902 Dr. Joseph De Lee of Chicago Lying-in Hospital and Dispensary offered the School a three month affiliation for their students in obstetrics at Lying-in. That affiliation endured twenty years.
- 1904 The Illinois Training School took over nursing care in the new 150 bed Contagious Hospital.
- 1905 First opened an affiliation program to help smaller schools meet demands of State registration.
- 1907 \$40,000 from Crerar Fund used to build new Residence at 308 Honore Street. Increasing number of nurses necessitated renting additional quarters.
- 1907 The School established a Central Diet Kitchen within the Hospital—with a graduate dietitian and student nurses for experience to prepare and serve all special diets.
- 1908 The Nursing Service took over Women's Receiving Room; in 1909 the Tuberculosis Hospital.
- 1908 The Illinois Training School placed graduate nurses, at the request of the Hospital, in Detention Hospital (later called Psychopathic Hospital), to supervise the nursing care and civil service attendants. That practise was discontinued in 1915 when all personnel in that building went under civil service.
- 1910 Properties later known as "509" South Honore were purchased.
- 1911 The organization and direction of Social Service was given to the School.
- 1912- A particularly prolonged and involved skirmish
1913 between the Board of Directors and Cook County Commissioners over the budget occurred. Legal action

prompted by public opinion forced the latter to pay back deficits on contract, when the School Board announced they would have to withdraw their services for lack of funds.

- 1913 Census of the Illinois Training School
43—School officers (including head nurses and Home Director)
3—special instructors (chemistry, bacteriology and - massage)
4—medical examiners
25—medical lecturers
142—Illinois Training School students plus 7 on affiliation
10—probationer students
15—affiliating students
20—graduate nurse students
230—graduate nurses in the hospital
28—orderlies
18—attendants
-

538 personnel (student and employed)

- 1916 The Board purchased the site of the present Residence—on Polk Street. Miss Wheeler and members of the Board almost succeeded in persuading business, professional, civic and educative organizations to approve and support a Central College of Nursing Education to replace the Illinois Training School. War intervened.
- 1917 Many Illinois Training School graduates served well in the Spanish-American War and World War I; many were awarded military decorations by their own and foreign governments.
- 1917 Thirty-six middle western schools of nursing affiliated at the Illinois Training School. Each affiliate student was there four months or more and had at least five hours of theory per week.
- 1914- The Illinois Training School furnished all nurses
1918 to Oak Park Hospital and from 1918-25 the Illinois Training School furnished all nurses to Highland

Park Hospital.

- 1918 The Illinois Training School students affiliated at Dunning (now Chicago State Hospital).
- 1918 In a five week period 2041 influenza patients were admitted to County, of whom 681 died. Class work was suspended. Forty nurses developed influenza; six died.
- 1920 A graduate course for dietitians was opened.
- 1922 The Student Self Government Association was organized and implemented.
- 1917 Occupational Therapy was organized under Social Service Department; in 1919 given separate status.
- 1923 The Illinois Training School took over the nursing service in Psychopathic Hospital.
- 1924 Psychopathic Social Service Department was organized.
- 1924 The Board of Directors was still interested in improving the Illinois Training School through connection with some University. Upon Miss Mary C. Wheeler's resignation the Board called Miss Laura Logan to replace her. Miss Logan had had the experience of establishing a tax supported School of Nursing as a School of Nursing in the University of Cincinnati.
- 1926 In June, 1926, the Board of Trustees of the Illinois Training School for Nurses made a contractual agreement with the Board of Trustees of the University of Chicago whereby the School would make a gift of its properties, real and personal, to the university. The latter agreed to establish an undergraduate school of nursing that would have the same rank and standing as the other Schools of the University and which would confer the Degree of Bachelor of Science.
- The Board wrote a letter of explanation to the Alumnae, another "To the Students, Faculty and Staff of the School," and a third to the Board of Trustees of the University of Chicago. (Reprinted in full in Mrs. Schryver's Book.)

It is apparent from the letters that the transfer was

initiated in good faith. The subsequent incomplete realization of the goals stated by the Board of Directors of the School can only be explained in terms of events external to the agreement. Although the total monetary value of the properties transferred to the University was quite large, it was insufficient to establish an autonomous school of nursing in perpetuity in the University.

The Board of Directors notified the Cook County Commissioners of its intention and informed the Commissioners that ample time would be allowed for them to make arrangements for nursing service for the hospital.

A citizens committee advised the Commissioners to open a new school of nursing.

- 1929 September, The Illinois Training School for Nurses, having transferred its properties and records to the University of Chicago, officially discontinued operating as a school. The Illinois Training School lives on in its most active alumnae association (organized in 1891) and the name of the school is perpetuated in that the professor of the graduate program of nursing education in the University of Chicago has the title of "Professor of Nursing Education on the Illinois Training School for Nurses Foundation." The alumnae active membership includes over six hundred of the 1845 graduates of the school. Monthly meetings of the Alumnae Association are very well attended. The association has made scholarship and library gifts to its successor, the Cook County School of Nursing. During the fifty years there were thirteen directors of the school, many of whom were leaders of nursing in America: — Isabel Hampton (Robb), Lavinia L. Dock, Helen Scott Hay, Isabel McIsaac, Mary C. Wheeler and Laura R. Logan, to name a few.

The Cook County School Of Nursing

This School was born to the heritage of rich traditions, of

a secure position in the field of Nursing Education, and with a fully operating organization composed of students, facilities, a highly qualified faculty and a competently administered curriculum.

The early founders of its predecessor had defined the principles of administration, control and operation of the School; had defined the relationship between its own Board of Managers (Directors) and the Board of Cook County Commissioners which in turn determined the relationship of the School to the Cook County Hospital; and had established a sound precedent of communication and cooperation with civic groups—all of which pertained for the Cook County School of Nursing.

Control

The Board of Directors of the County School had seven members who had served several years on the Illinois Training School Board and who continued to serve many years on the new one.

Purpose

The Board of Directors of the Cook County School of Nursing defined the purpose of the School in Article II of the By-Laws:

“The purpose of this corporation is to provide education in the science and art of nursing and to furnish nursing service to the sick and wounded.”

Traditionally, the Board of Directors of the School signed a contract periodically with the Cook County Board of Commissioners by the terms of which the School provided the nursing service to the patients in the Cook County Hospital and the County of Cook provided the funds which were used to operate the School. The format of the contract as well as the formality of signing became somewhat stylized through time and it happened that the relationship continued for some period of years without either the formality of signing or the restatement of the contract. Under the administration of the Cook County School of Nursing there have been only two contracts; the original one in 1929 and another in 1939. On May 17, 1949, the Commissioners cancelled the contract with the understanding that a new contract would be entered

into at the end of the "required time." (1949 Annual Message of William N. Erickson, President of the Board of Commissioners.)

The first contract between the Commissioners and the Cook County School of Nursing was signed August 15, 1929.

Organization and administration of the Cook County School followed the same pattern as its predecessor. Director, one associate director, ten or more assistant directors (each in charge of the nursing service of a Clinical Division in the hospital), supervisors, pre-clinical instructors, non-nurse instructors, and head nurses.

1949

The position of Associate Director of Nursing Service was created. Frances L. A. Powell, Cook County School of Nursing, 1931, was appointed.

Business administration was conducted by the office of the Business Manager, E. C. Overbeck, until 1955. Robert S. Petersen is the present Business Manager.

Personnel Administration

The position of Personnel Director was created in 1949 with the appointment of Laila D. Skinner. Lydia Brickbauer was appointed Assistant Personnel Director, in addition to her responsibilities as Director of Residence.

Educational facilities 1930-1935 were located in the last Residence building constructed . . . by the Illinois Training School—"509" South Honore Street. The science laboratories of "509" were located on the basement floor with an outside entrance that led down from the street level of Honore Street. The class rooms, the assembly hall and the demonstration room were on the first and second floors somewhere in the maze of corridors of the north end of the building. The well stocked library was on the first floor. The equipment and physical facilities for teaching and learning were more than sufficient to meet the recommended standards of the time even though in retrospect that equipment might seem to be quaint.

Programs offered by the School are the same as those that were offered by the Illinois Training School.

1) Basic, three year diploma program

- 2) Courses for Affiliating Students
- 3) Hospital Dietetic Course
- 4) Courses for Graduate Nurses

Curriculum of the Basic Program

During the twenty-five years, the curriculum has undergone tremendous change—because of internal and external influences. Although essentially the same subject matters are covered in 1955 as were in 1930, the course content, departmental titles, course names and number of hours per course have changed remarkably.

In 1932, three hundred and eighteen hours plus thirteen lengthy field trips were devoted to public health nursing and the social sciences. Apparently, during those dark years of the depression, major parts of the curriculum were given to help the student to understand how social ills and physical ailments interact.

The separate courses in Pathology and Public Hygiene and Sanitation have been absorbed into Medical Science.

Those who were in the School between 1932 and 1934 will recall that most of the basic sciences were given at the University of Illinois under the supervision of department heads there with close guidance and instruction by instructors from the Cook County School of Nursing.

Those courses were returned to the class rooms and laboratories at 1900 West Polk Street when that building opened in May, 1935. By 1939 the hours given to the Social Sciences and Public Health Nursing had been reduced to eighty-four. The students no longer made follow-up calls to the homes of patients nor did they have experience in Out-patient Obstetrics with the University of Illinois to deliver babies in the home. Their only contact with homes was and is now through public health experience (V.N.A. or I.W.).

Certain changes in the curriculum must have been due to recommendations made by A Curriculum Guide for Schools of Nursing published by the National League for Nursing in 1937—or in anticipation of such recommendations. Introductory Nursing became Nursing Arts I and II; Problems in Field of Nursing was renamed Professional Adjustments; Bacteriology became Microbiology, etc. Certain changes in

placement of courses were the result of decisions of the faculty in effort to promote better correlation of courses.

The Bolton-Bailey Act of Congress in 1943 which brought into existence the United States Cadet Nurse Corps, caused the curriculum to be accelerated, certain class hours to be reduced, and greatly increased the burden on instructors and instructing supervisors because of the tremendous increase in the number of students. Although the Bolton-Bailey Act expired in 1945 it was 1947 before the County basic curriculum was readjusted.

University of Illinois

In September 1949 the University of Illinois initiated a contractual arrangement, a type of affiliation, with the Board of Directors of the Cook County School of Nursing. Students who entered this joint program had their nursing courses at County and a specified formal academic program within the University. Although both bodies did make curricular adjustments, the relationship was never clearly defined. Between 1949 and 1954 our school was named "The University of Illinois—Cook County School of Nursing" and several students graduated from the continuation program with a Bachelor of Nursing degree. During that period the School had both a diploma and a degree program.

In 1954 the relationship was severed by mutual agreement. The "University of Illinois" was dropped from the School's name. But throughout that five year period the alumnae association was faced with the unhappy prospect of becoming an organization without a school—just as the Illinois Training School had been twenty years before.

Customs and New Traditions

1. The County School perpetuated the student government association, "Big Sister" Committee plan, the choral group (for a few years), regular weekly teas, and other social functions that were begun in the days of the Illinois Training School.

2. "Capping" has always been a distinct evening function usually with a speaker.

3. Graduation exercises, once held at Murphy Memorial Hall, have been conducted at the Residence since 1935 except-

ing for the few years the students joined in the University of Illinois commencement on Navy Pier.

4. In 1933, the students started a school paper called "The Chatter" which they mimeographed on an old hand-operated machine. Later the paper was called "The Chevron" and was printed.

5. The annual springtime "County Fair" has grown to a gala event of gaily decorated booths, talent shows and a genuine carnival atmosphere, staged on second floor foyer and in the students lounge. The event is followed by the annual spring house cleaning by the janitors, painters, etc.

6. The School now accepts married students. Enrolled students are asked to consult the faculty regarding their intention to marry while in the school.

7. Social privileges (late-leaves and overnights) are more numerous and generous and parallel privileges usually granted in colleges.

8. Organized social and athletic events now are planned for participation by the various student groups in the West Side Medical Center.

9. The School considers for admission any young man or woman applicant who meets the requirements as outlined in the school bulletin. Nine men have graduated and there are two graduating this year.

10. A newer tradition has persisted from World War II days—periodically the students are guests of Fort Sheridan for dances. The post bus calls for and returns the students to the Residence.

Residence 1929-1930

Due to the unusual circumstances the County Commissioners were paying rent to a private University (of Chicago) for housing the students and personnel of the Cook County School of Nursing at "509" South Honore. Also "509" could not house all personnel.

A special advisory committee recommended the construction of a large Residence. A Public Works Administration Loan of \$2,500,000.00 plus a bond issue were planned. Construction began and halted at ground floor level in 1931 because of insufficient funds due to under-subscription of the

bond issue.

Building was resumed in 1934 and in May 1935 the seventeen story Residence was opened for occupancy.

Generally speaking the building has had excellent maintenance and today, in its twentieth year, can be ranked high in modernity, efficiency and comfort.

Directors

1929-1932	Miss Laura Logan
1932-1937	Miss Edna Sadie Newman
1937-1942	Mrs. Ada Reitz Crocker
1942-1948	Miss Edna Sadie Newman
1948-1949	Acting Director, Miss E. Elizabeth Geiger
1949-1954	Miss Geiger
1954-1955	Acting Director, Miss Frances L. A. Powell
May, 1955	Miss Powell

Miss Logan has retired from active nursing and is living in Halifax, Nova Scotia. Mrs. Crocker also retired and is in Altadena, California. Miss Newman retired from active nursing in the summer of 1954 and is now occupying her very new home in Chesterton, Indiana. Miss Geiger became Director, Chicago Wesley Memorial Hospital School of Nursing in September, 1954, succeeding Miss Newman there as she did here.

In 1950 Miss Samelson was appointed as Recruitment Officer. Mrs. Claire Page has been employed as a public relations officer since 1947. Dr. Melvin Afremow and Miss Lydia Brickbauer are almost traditions. Formerly Dr. Afremow was assistant to Dr. Paul Rhoades, the school physician. But for many years now he has been Chief Attending Physician with office in the well-equipped, well organized Infirmary on the fifteenth floor of the Residence. Miss Brickbauer has been director of the Residence for a long time and more recently has the added functions of Assistant Personnel Director.

It would be impossible to list the contributions made by individuals to the continued growth of this School. For many

years there have been twenty some standing committees comprised of faculty members. The faculty included the executive group, the supervisors, the head nurses, the instructors, librarian, personnel directors, and representatives from the social service and dietary departments. Those committees such as the procedure, in-service staff education, records, and others—contributed a very great deal to keep the standards of theory and practice at optimal levels.

Other persons less intimately associated with the activities of the School exerted considerable influence on its life. That was particularly true of the members of the Board of Directors who served through many years. Mr. George B. McKibbin, Mrs. Bruce MacLeish, Dr. Nathan S. Davis, III, Mrs. Grace F. Schryver, Mr. Fletcher Durbin and Mrs. Harry Hart were active members from the latter days of the Illinois Training School to beyond the first twenty years of the Cook County School. Mrs. MacLeish, in her activities with the household committee, was constant in her interests and efforts in maintaining and improving the Residence.



Entrance to Oak Forest hospital as it appeared in 1959.

CHAPTER 10

OAK FOREST HOSPITAL

THE days of the so-called "poorhouse" are numbered in America, and by 1956 already had come to an end in Cook county, both officially and otherwise.

Not that public aid is no longer needed, even tho a society, as a whole, may be thriving. The need will always be present, but now it is administered in more than a dozen other ways to the financially unfortunate of all ages.

Instead of going "over the hill to the poorhouse," a dread that haunted older people for centuries, or the fear of a widowed, financially-distraught mother that her small children would be torn from her and placed in an orphanage, humane planning has brought both mental and financial aid.

Now aid can come from any of the following sources:

Old Age and Survivors Insurance (Federal Social Security) that brings monthly checks to men of 65 years and over and women of 62 and over if they have paid into the fund during their working years.

Old Age Assistance, paid for from state funds but administered by counties, for needy men and women of 65 and over who cannot qualify under the Social Security program.

General Assistance, for all age groups, supported with state

and local funds, but administered by local municipalities under the direction of the Illinois Public Aid Commission.

Aid to the Blind, state and federal funds administered by the Cook County Department of Welfare.

Foster Home Care of Dependent Children, public and private funds administered by the county, city of Chicago, state, and private welfare agencies.

Aid to Dependent Children, funds contributed by the state and federal governments, and administered by the Cook County Department of Welfare.

Pensions, financed by the individual and employer during the period the recipient was employed in private or public enterprise.

Pensions for disabled war veterans, administered with federal funds.

Funds from various insurance plans paid for by the worker during his earning years.

Low-cost housing projects, financed by federal, state and city agencies, available to low-income families.

State unemployment compensation, financed from contributions by employers and state governments, and supervised by the federal government.

Hospital and medical care insurance carried by individuals.

Churches and other private charities that maintain homes for the aged, hospitals for children, and, in some cases, limited grants of money to the needy individuals.

Employment agencies, both private and public, that help in finding suitable jobs for the unemployed.

Wider use of the want-ad sections of newspapers in finding jobs for the employable.

Gradual lowering of barriers against the employment of women, and a similar onslaught against employment barriers that have existed because of race, creed, color, and physical handicaps.

Where public aid becomes necessary, the recipients, whether they live in Cook county or elsewhere, will not become affluent. In fact, only their barest wants will be met. But they may continue to live in familiar surroundings with a degree of dignity unknown to previous generations. Even in the case of dependent children, with the aids that now are available, the youngsters can continue to live in the home they know and with the mother they love.



Cook county's beautiful Oak Forest hospital, as seen from the air in 1958. Once a "poor farm," now a dignified haven of hope for the destitute, chronically ill, most of whom are aged.

Cook county's poorhouses, from the first almshouse that the county board established on the public square shortly after the county was incorporated in 1831, down to the Oak Forest Infirmary or poor farm that began operation in 1910, the basic idea was the same. The destitute of all ages had to be fed and housed, and altho those who administered public gratuities did so with a degree of kindness, the bare fact was that the

general public, preoccupied with earning a living, gave little thought to the care of these unfortunates.

With the dawn of the era of public aids, however, the picture at Oak Forest, as elsewhere, began to change. Fewer and fewer of the destitute, who were able-bodied, found it necessary to go there to live out the remaining years of their lives.

The administrators of Oak Forest were encouraged when the peak load of nearly 4,300 inmates at the institution during the 1930s began to dwindle. Of material aid in this direction was the aforementioned social security benefits, the distribution of which began in January of 1940. (The legislation, sponsored by President Franklin D. Roosevelt, had been enacted by Congress in August of 1935, and altho it became effective on Jan. 1, 1937, the first monthly benefits that were accruing under it could not be paid out until three years later.)

Thus it was that by 1940 Oak Forest ceased, in effect, to be a poor farm, and gradually became a charitable hospital, augmenting the greatly overcrowded County hospital. It was a place in which Cook county could care for its chronically ill, leaving the facilities at County hospital available for more emergent and acute cases.

The final break-away from the "poorhouse" idea came in 1956 when the state department of public health licensed the entire institution to operate as two hospitals—one for the care of the chronically ill, and the other for the care of the tubercular. On Oct. 1, 1957 the county board adopted a resolution, introduced jointly by President Daniel Ryan and Commissioner James F. Ashenden, chairman of the board's Oak Forest Institutions committee, changing the name simply to "Oak Forest hospital."

More Space Needed Per Patient

The complete conversion to a hospital, however, brought about certain restrictions that were to plague the county board. Principal of these was the state requirement that each patient

be allotted a minimum space of 800 square feet—an area 8 feet wide by 10 feet long.

This gradually reduced the number of patients to some 2,600 in 1957. Of this latter figure 2,180 were in the chronic disease unit and 420 in the tubercular unit.

This pinch for space prompted County Commissioner John Mackler, Jr., in November of 1957 to call for the construction of additional hospital wards. He said "two-thirds" of the elderly sick persons in need of hospitalization at Oak Forest died before they could be admitted because of lack of bed space and beds.

Mackler asked that a portion of the \$9,600,000 worth of Oak Forest rehabilitation bond money authorized at the June 3, 1957 referendum be used for this expansion.

"With our ever-growing population," commented President Ryan, "we'll never have enough bed space at Oak Forest. If we had 200 more beds there today, we'd have them filled by tomorrow. Before long, however, we may have to float another bond issue to increase the size of the institution."

In the meantime, President Ryan appointed a three-man committee of medical experts to work with Supt. Carl K. Schmidt to determine what existing space, if any, in the Oak Forest buildings could be converted from present uses to bed space. The committee consisted of Dr. Karl A. Meyer, medical superintendent of all county institutions; Dr. Eugene J. Chesrow, medical director of the chronic disease unit at Oak Forest; and Dr. George C. Turner, medical director of the Oak Forest tuberculosis unit.

Space Put To Best Use

Near the close of 1957 the committee of doctors reported to President Ryan that by knocking out certain wall partitions, by making large rooms out of smaller ones which had been used for other purposes, and by converting some of the living-room space into hospital wards, space could be found for 120 more beds for the chronically ill.

By using the county's own staff of workers, including plumbers, carpenters, painters, and electricians, under the direction of Gerald J. Sullivan, superintendent of maintenance for all county institutions, this particular remodeling work was completed in 1958.

To care for these additional patients, who were admitted as the rooms became available, the county had to hire an additional 31 employes, such as nurses, attendants, and janitors. An additional \$140,000 was appropriated in the 1958 budget to meet the expenses of caring for these added patients.

Total 1959 appropriations for Oak Forest hospital were \$7,798,267, and the number of employes fixed at 1,359, of whom 48 were physicians, 70 registered nurses, and over 400 men and women who serve as practical nurses and orderlies.

Because figures fluctuate considerably during any period of readjustment, let us here note that by the beginning of 1959, Oak Forest had 2,719 beds, of which 2,290 were in the chronic disease hospital and 429 in the tuberculosis hospital. Average bed occupancy in the chronic disease unit was 99 per cent, considered by hospital administrators to be as high as possible because of the goings and comings of patients.

On June 10, 1959, the count was 2,213 chronically ill, and 270 tubercular. During 1958 the total number of chronically ill who were given care was 3,480, and tubercular, 806, for a grand total of 4,286.

Progress during a rehabilitation and building program such as was under way at both Oak Forest and County hospitals during 1958 and 1959 and which was to continue for the next two or three years is difficult to report in preparing materials for a book because, by the time the book is off the press and in the hands of the public, the situation will have changed.

A mid-1958 development, however, was the decision of the county board to add over 200 beds at the chronic disease unit

at Oak Forest by constructing a three-story wing adjoining the receiving department. The cost, estimated at \$2,400,000 was to be met thru the sale of a portion of the \$9,600,000 bond issue. These additional beds, together with those mentioned previously, would bring the bed capacity of the chronic disease unit to around 2,500.

Oak Forest hospital is composed of 60 buildings in which there are some seven and one-half miles of corridors. These buildings are spread over 337.5 acres of land—some wooded and some in fields—that lies at the south-east corner of Cicero avenue and 159th street, adjoining the village of Oak Forest, in Bremen township, some 19 miles south-west of Chicago's loop.

With all court house records destroyed by the great Chicago fire of 1871, and with the meager newspapers of the 1840s and 1850s paying little attention to Cook county affairs, we have been unable to determine the exact date on which the county abandoned its first almshouse which had been built on the public square in 1832.

Circumstantial evidence, however, makes it appear as tho a down-town almshouse was maintained until 1855.

In 1847 those of the paupers who were sick were removed from the almshouse and placed in the newly established County hospital in Tippecanoe Hall on the corner of Kinzie and State streets, as recounted previously in the chapter on County hospital.

The presence of the poorhouse in the heart of a budding young metropolis was an unsavory thing to the proud townsfolk and they insisted upon its removal.

Moved To Dunning

The county board in 1851 purchased for poor farm purposes 160 acres of farm land, owned by Peter Ludby. The farm lay in Norwood Park township, 12 miles northwest of downtown Chicago.

At first the poor farm was referred to as "Jefferson" because

the nearest railroad station (on the North Western railroad) was at the then village of Jefferson, two miles to the east.

Later on, however, the county, at its own expense, constructed a three-mile-long spur railroad connecting with the Milwaukee line to the south. The county also constructed a depot at the farm, naming it "Dunning" in honor of a prominent pioneer family of that community.

Trains, bearing both passengers and supplies, were run directly to the farm from Chicago. (The site now, of course, is that of the Chicago State hospital, an institution for the mentally ill, and altho in Norwood Park township, the mailing address is 6500 W. Irving Park road, Chicago.)

The main building at the county poor farm at "Jefferson," which we hereafter shall refer to as Dunning, was completed and occupied in 1855. It was a three-story affair costing \$25,000.

Adjoining this main building, the county erected a smaller structure in which to care for the insane. Care of the mentally ill then was a county function, later to be taken over by the state.

The crude and cruel handling of mental patients in those days makes one shudder. Types and degrees of mental illness were little noticed and certainly not understood. No cures were attempted.

If you were adjudged "crazy" in those days, into the cell you went. Such cells were seven feet wide and eight feet long.

"The doors of these cubicles," wrote James C. Russell, "were fitted with apertures through which to pass food. The only heat came from a stove in the corridor which did not raise the temperature in some of the cells above the freezing point. The cold, however, did not freeze out the vermin with which the beds, walls and floors were alive. The arrangements for bathing were so imperfect that during the winter months there were no ablutions of the body; even in summer the

number of tubs was too small and they were inconveniently located.”¹

In 1870 the county built a new asylum at the Dunning location. This was a three-story structure, 272 feet by 116 feet, costing \$135,000. The following year its capacity was increased by placing cells in the basement, and in 1873 a fourth story was added. By 1878 the insane institution was housing 437 inmates, of whom 100 had to sleep on the floor, but expansion soon remedied this overcrowding.

(Between 1863 and 1866 the county also maintained a general hospital at Dunning.)

Horses Had The “Epizoozy”

In perusing the files of the Chicago Tribune, kept in the vaults of the Chicago Historical Society, we came across the following brief item in the Nov. 5, 1872 issue of that newspaper:

“The County Commissioners met yesterday . . . The Superintendent of Public Charities . . . recommended the purchase of two yoke of oxen to take the place of the Insane Asylum horses suffering from epizoozy. The purchase was ordered.”

To the young generation of today, born even since the advent of motor scooters and jet-propelled airplanes, the days in which ox-drawn vehicles still were in use in Cook county must seem to have been back in the Middle Ages. Yet there can be and probably are persons still living in Cook county today who can remember back to the times when oxen finally yielded completely to faster-stepping horses in the evolution of transportation.

(Reference to the “epizoozy” among horses in 1872 probably deserves a bit more explanation before continuing with the subject of county poor farms.

(The horse was the principal source of local transportation

1. History of Medicine and Surgery, Biographical Publishing Corp., 1922, p. 242.

power of that day. It was used for pulling buggies, coaches, wagons, farm implements, and even street cars. Thus when a widespread disease struck the horses thruout the nation that year, particularly those in cities, transportation was so disrupted that many persons had to walk miles to their destinations, and drayage came almost to a standstill. Newspapers were filled with accounts of it.

(Nearly all horses became extremely ill, many died, many were slow in recovering, and many were left unfit for work. The disease never was diagnosed, veterinary medicine of that day being at a low stage of development. Possibly it was a particularly virulent form of distemper. The term "epizoozy" is spelled "epizooty" in modern dictionaries and is defined as an "epizootic disease," or one of epidemic proportions among animals.)

In addition to its infirmary for the destitute, and its institution for the insane, the county in 1898 built at Dunning a consumptive hospital.

Shortly after the turn of the century the county commissioners realized that a complete rebuilding program was needed for Dunning; all buildings were too small and were in disrepair. Also, in that era, tho a large number of destitute persons sent to the "poor farm" were sufficiently able-bodied to help raise foodstuffs consumed at the institution, the tillable acreage was insufficient to grow all the grains needed for feeding the farm's livestock.

In the meantime, the state had decided that the care of the insane was a state function, rather than that of the counties, and in this Cook county was in complete agreement.

For the year of 1910, shortly before Cook county was to move its poor farm to a new location at Oak Forest, and just before it was to turn over to the state all its Dunning properties for insane institution purposes, let us look at the Dunning institution population figures.

In the 1910 annual report of county institutions, covering the fiscal year from Dec. 1, 1909 to Dec. 1, 1910, we learn that the average daily population for that year at Dunning was as follows:

Insane department, 2,252 (1,165 males and 1,087 females); consumptive patients, 176 (145 males and 31 females); and poor farm inmates, 1,731 (1,347 males and 384 females).

This last figure, showing that many more elderly men were being cared for at the poor farm than elderly women, bears out the statement of the late Frank Venecek, superintendent at Oak Forest from 1923 to 1949, that "grown children always are more willing to care for their old mothers than their old fathers."

The county board meanwhile, had sought and found a new site for its poor farm.

At a board meeting on March 18, 1907, while Edward J. Brundage still was president, Commissioner William Busse (Mt. Prospect) secured the adoption of his resolution directing William McLaren, superintendent of public service, to advertise for offers of sale to the county of farm lands "not to exceed 100 acres" for use as a county farm and location of the poor-house.

The board opened the bids (13 of them) on April 8 and found that prices ranged from \$12,000 for 100 acres near Arlington Heights to \$99,610 for 99.6 acres near Dunning, the site of the existing poor farm. These the board eventually rejected as being either too high or the property unsuitable.

(On April 15, 1907, Brundage resigned as president and member of the board and was succeeded as president by Commissioner William Busse who was chosen on that date by his fellow board members.)

The board readvertised for bids for the poor farm, opened the 21 that were submitted on Oct. 21, 1907, and again rejected them for similar reasons.

More Acreage Needed

By this time the board realized that if the 160 acres at Dunning were not enough for poor farm purposes, it should not be content with a mere 100 at some new location. Therefore, the board changed its specifications and advertised for from 200 to 300 acres.

This time five bids were submitted and opened on Dec. 9, 1907. They were referred to a special committee, consisting of five commissioners and five citizens.

On Dec. 16, 1907 the special committee recommended the prompt acceptance of one of the tracts offered—the one in Bremen township which eventually was to be chosen. This land belonged to C. L. Buss who asked \$140 per acre for 120 of its acres, and \$125 per acre for the remaining 129 acres, making a total of \$32,925 asked for the 249 acres he said was in the tract.

In his offer, Buss wrote: "The ground is high, rolling and fertile, with natural drainage, about 40 acres of which is covered with fine timber."

The special committee also recommended that a \$2,000,000 bond issue be submitted to the voters at the following April election to raise money for infirmary construction costs.

The entire matter was referred to William F. Struckman, assistant county attorney, for a legal opinion. (The duties of the county attorney now are handled by the state's attorney, who assigns most of the county's legal work to the head of the civil branch of his office.)

On Jan. 27, 1908 Struckman reported at a board meeting that a survey of the land showed it to consist of 254.38 acres, instead of the 249 as first reported, and that this would raise the price to \$33,624.28.

The finance committee, at this Jan. 27 meeting, recommended the purchase at this price and the commissioners, reconvening as the board, then and there unanimously approved

the purchase.

(In later years—around 1925—the board purchased additional parcels of adjoining lands to bring its Oak Forest holdings to the present 337.5 acres.)

On Feb. 3, 1908, the firm of Holabird & Roche, architects, was employed to design buildings at Oak Forest that would care for 2,300 inmates; also to supervise the construction of the buildings and the landscaping. (This was the noted firm that had designed the present county building and also the connecting city hall.)

John M. Ewen was retained as consulting engineer, a position he held during the construction of the county building in 1906 and 1907.

On March 2, the board directed the then county clerk, Joseph F. Haas, to place the \$2,000,000 bond issue proposal before the voters at the April 7 election. (This was done and the proposition carried.)

On April 30, the board directed Superintendent of Public Service McLaren to enter into negotiations with the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railway for construction of a spur line into the infirmary grounds and the building of a terminal depot, with the cost to be paid by the county.

The board on that date also specified that "the site of the new infirmary be known as Oak Forest."

(These new Oak Forest holdings adjoined and lay to the southeast of the unincorporated settlement known as Auburn Park in Bremen township. By 1915, the Auburn Park residents had changed the name of their unincorporated village to Oak Forest, naming it after the institution, according to Fred Kohlmann, long-time resident and merchant in the village. It was not until 1947, however, that the village officially incorporated itself as Oak Forest. The county institution is not included within the village boundaries.)

On July 6 tentative plans for construction of the institu-

tional buildings were approved by the board.

Water Works First Award

On Sept. 21, 1908 the board awarded a contract for the first project at Oak Forest—the construction of a water works. The successful bidder was the William H. Cater Contracting Company whose low bid was \$1.85 per foot for well-drilling and \$2,974 “for the balance of work required.”

Giving a good insight as to the Oak Forest infirmary problems that confronted the county commissioners of that day is the annual report of President William Busse, dated Dec. 7, 1908. The report says:

“Contracts for sinking wells to provide a water supply and the construction of a railroad track to connect the main plant with the station have been let, and today bids have been received for the construction of various buildings.

“These buildings constitute the principal features of comprehensive plans that are expected to give Cook county the best arranged and equipped poorhouse in the country.

“It rests with this board to see that these plans are faithfully carried out. The undertaking is something new in almshouse construction and it is highly important that no mistakes be made.

“One of the important things the board will have to do in connection with the new infirmary is to devise a scheme of administration. I realize that to organize an institution of this magnitude will require a great deal of thought. To assist us in this matter I would recommend that the recently appointed Citizens Committee be asked to cooperate with the board to bring about the best results.

“Another question that will have to be considered in connection with the new infirmary is what Cook county shall do with its consumptives who are in the early stages of the disease and without the means of procuring proper diet and care.

“Physicians and charity workers prominently interested in

the war against the white plague have urged upon me the necessity of the county's caring for tuberculosis sufferers whose health might be restored if given curative treatment on the first appearance of the disease.

"It is contended that these sufferers in the congested tenement districts, surrounded as they are by insanitary conditions, cannot be properly cared for, and that they are prolific sources of the spread of contagion. It has been suggested that a building of a temporary character be erected on the new grounds for the purpose of accommodating this class of patients.

"Last year the board adopted the policy of caring for only such patients as were in the last stages of the disease. This action was taken on the recommendation of the Dunning consulting staff, for the reason that only patients in a dying condition were received at the consumptive hospital at Dunning. It was decided to make no attempt at curative treatment, but to provide the greatest possible comfort for the patients during their last days. Whether this policy shall be changed and effort at an open-air and dietary treatment shall be made is a question for this board to answer.

"I would recommend that some provision be made for these patients in early stages of the disease who have become dependent on public charity. They should be given some light work about the farm or grounds that would enable them to live outdoors in seasonable weather.

"With proper care and diet it is believed that many of them would be restored to health and become able to support themselves and families. To provide for them will require the construction of a building not included in the present plans. It need not be of a permanent or expensive character, as the adoption of the scheme would be in the nature of an experiment. If it should prove unsuccessful or prohibitively expensive, it could be abandoned.

"Work on the new consumptive hospital at County hospital

grounds is well under way. Under the contract it should be completed by May 1, (1909), and it probably will be ready for patients early next summer. It is planned for patients in the last stages of the disease, and every effort has been made to provide for their care and comfort.

"It should be the object of this board to push the construction of the consumptive hospital and the new infirmary plant at Oak Forest to early completion, in order that the inmates of the old Poorhouse and Consumptive hospital at Dunning may be removed as soon as possible to their new quarters.

Institutions Always Overcrowded

"The overcrowding of our charitable institutions presents a question to which I invite your early and earnest consideration. There is a persistent demand for more room, more beds, more help, from each of these institutions. The increase of inmates is exceeding the natural growth of the population and each year places a heavier burden on the financial resources of the county, but Cook county must provide ample facilities for the care of her unfortunate and helpless, her insane and afflicted, no matter what the cost. . . .

"The insane Hospital seems, at this time, to be the most overcrowded. A large number of patients have been sleeping on the floors. This fact has led to serious charges being made against the institution.

"These conditions are due in a large measure to the small number of transfers made to state asylums during the last two years. In 1906 there were 517 transfers; in 1907, 96, and so far in 1908, only 89. The State Board of Charities has authorized the county court to send all new patients to state institutions, except those whose friends wish them to go to Dunning. . . .

"It is hoped that the state authorities will take over the asylum in a short time, but it will not do so soon enough, it is feared, to relieve existing conditions. The state is required

to provide for the insane in other county institutions before taking over the hospital at Dunning, and this may cause a delay of several months."

Thus we see from the Busse report that a new hospital for consumptives was being built at County hospital, and that thought was being given to effecting a cure for other consumptives who would be sent to Oak Forest.

Why, one may ask, was something not done about this before? The answer is simple. Medical knowledge was just in the awakening stage. Medical scientists, hospital administrators and nurses were turning over the flat rocks under which the disease bugs had lived, undisturbed, thruout all preceding generations of mankind. A school child of today can be eternally grateful that he was born in the era of modern medicine.

The years of 1909 and 1910 were marked with the construction of 19 infirmary buildings and the adoption of plans for additional buildings.

The Feb. 11, 1909 letting was the largest. On that date the board awarded to the Alling Construction Company, whose low bid was \$1,257,018, the contract for construction of six ward buildings, each to house 210 inmates; a general hospital for 188, an aged couples building for 32, an irresponsibles building for 160, a receiving building for 32, and temporary tubercular quarters for 100. A total of 1,772 inmates could thusly be accommodated.

On that same date the board received a communication from its special committee and architect stating that because 320 tubercular patients from among the 1,870 inmates at Dunning were to be transferred to the city tuberculosis hospital, the new poorhouse and tuberculosis quarters at Oak Forest would care for 222 more inmates than the number provided for.

On March 7, 1910 President William Busse appointed Nelson A. Cool as superintendent at Oak Forest. On the following Dec. 12, Peter Bartzen, who had succeeded Busse as president,

replaced Cool by appointing Edward N. Stein to the superintendency.

From a report of Superintendent Stein, covering the 12-months-period from Dec. 1, 1910 to Dec. 1, 1911, we learn of the first occupancy at the new institution. The report said, in part:

"This institution was opened on the first week in December, 1910, with 1,731 inmates who were transferred from the old Infirmary at Dunning. During the year the admissions were 2,412; 1,859 left or were discharged and 399 died. The daily average for this year was 1,694 compared with 1,582 last year at the Old Institution, a daily average increase of 112. . . .

"The water supply was not sufficient until a double acting pump was installed, and since then a new well has been bored to the depth of 1,400 feet and equipped with an air compressor; the capacity of this well will insure water for a much larger population. . . .

"During the summer months, July and August, an average of 350 of the poor children of the city were sent here weekly for an outing and games, refreshments and amusements were furnished them under the direction of Mr. Henry Lynch, business manager at Dunning Institutions.

"Tent" Treatment For Tuberculosis

"In the workshops all the shoes were repaired, mattresses made and overhauled, brooms were made for this and other institutions.

"The Tuberculosis Hospital is now completed and ready to be furnished. The ground around it has been graded, seeded for lawn, and sidewalks laid. In connection with the hospital, a tent colony has been established, consisting of 80 'tents' which will be of great benefit to incipient cases."

The Stein report also said that the tuberculosis hospital at Oak Forest had been erected at a cost of \$179,850 and would be occupied in 1912.

Tying up some loose ends we see by the report that the recommendation of the former president, Busse, regarding tubercular patients, was being tried out.

Busse had suggested that an attempt be made to cure such patients, whose cases were not too far advanced, by housing them in tents. Also, that the new tuberculosis hospital was to be used for patients in the more advanced stages of the disease.

During the period from December of 1910 to June 29, 1912, the county continued to operate the Cook County Institutions at Dunning, but with most of the poor, infirm, and tubercular moved to their new home at Oak Forest, the Dunning inmates consisted principally of the insane.

But even with more space available for the insane at Dunning because of the mass movement to Oak Forest, conditions for treatment of the mentally ill were not first class and the county was anxious for the state to take over.

To James J. Leddy, who has worked in the office of the county comptroller since 1911 and now is chief clerk, we are indebted for an eye-witness account of an incident at Dunning that reflects conditions there shortly before the transfer of the institution to the state.

Recalls Leddy: "One hot summer day in 1911 when I was out at Dunning delivering the employes' pay checks to the timekeeper, I walked about the grounds and was attracted by an insane patient who had gone berserk.

"They had him strapped in a tub full of water to calm him down. His feet and legs were strapped, they had his arms and hands strapped to the sides of his body and he was hollerin' for all get-out. As I stood there looking at him, I saw that a house fly kept lighting on his nose and face, and he was unable to brush it away. This was an annoyance that did not lend to the poor fellow's already disturbed peace of mind.

"When I got back to the County building, I looked up President Bartzen, who was a wonderful man, and told him

they should have netting to place over the patients who couldn't help themselves.

"'Old Pete,' as we called him, didn't say a word, but that very day went out to Dunning to try to correct the situation."

Dunning Sold For One Dollar

On June 29, 1912 the county board "sold" to the state for the token price of one dollar the county's entire Dunning holdings, then valued at \$1,519,128.

The board members were only too glad to be relieved of the responsibility of caring for the insane. The state renamed the institution the Chicago State hospital and operates it to this day in caring for and treating, by improved methods, the mentally ill.

As we move on with our narrative, the great institution at Oak Forest was caring for the indigents of Cook county in a humanitarian fashion generally unknown thruout the ages of civilized man, and a thousand times better than the custom of certain uncivilized peoples who permitted their old folks to wander purposely out into a blizzard, there to die, so that the tribe would no longer have to care for an unwanted burden.

The Aged Were Proud Producers

Instead, new concepts of caring for the destitute aged have been evolving. Those who were able and could give full or part-time service were encouraged to do what they could. They hoed in the garden, worked in the fields, tended the chickens and the pigs and mended and rebuilt mattresses, cobbled shoes, fashioned artificial limbs, helped in the kitchen, wove rugs, knitted and sewed, worked in the flower gardens, and even painted pictures. They enjoyed one another's company.

As Tennyson says in his poem, *Ulysses*: "Old age hath yet his honor and his toil."

Lest one gain the impression that these destitute aged were merely doing token work in a pretense of helping themselves, let us cite the annual message of then county board president,



Between 1851 and 1910 Cook county maintained a poor farm at Dunning. In addition to caring for able-bodied destitutes, the institution at one time was used as a county general hospital (No. 3), and, later, as a hospital (separate buildings) for the mentally ill and the tubercular. County, having transferred its poor farm activities to Oak Forest in 1910, "sold" Dunning holdings to state in 1912 for token payment of one dollar.

Pictured (top) is Dunning administration building and (lower) walled detention hospital for insane as they appeared at turn of century.

the late Anton J. Cermak, which covered the year of 1927.

That was during a period, the so-called "Roaring Twenties," when, according to popular misconception, everybody was working and everybody was happy. Yet at that time, specifically on Nov. 25, 1927, the total population at Oak Forest was 4,037, including 517 destitute tubercular patients.

The Cermak report said that the Oak Forest Institutions, with the aid of many of its aged destitute, that year produced \$246,546 worth of products, divided as follows: farm, \$65,931; greenhouse, \$11,690; industrial shops, \$65,818, and bakery, \$103,106.

Concerning this, the report stated: "The sum of \$246,546 is a large item when figured to a degree as retrenchment, as it is representative of more than a fifth of the entire appropriation for the conduct of the Oak Forest Institutions this year."

The farm products alluded to included hay and grain, fed to the farm's livestock, and enough vegetables to supply the entire institution, in season, with sufficient left over to send material amounts to both County hospital and the county jail. In addition Oak Forest canned 1,387 gallons of its own tomatoes, made 21,385 heads of cabbage into sauerkraut, and stored in pits for winter consumption 825 bushels of carrots, 3,000 bushels of beets, 1,000 bushels of parsnips, and 1,900 heads of cabbage.

The farm's livestock products consumed during the year were valued as follows: milk from Toggenburg goats, \$4,030; poultry and eggs, \$7,231; butchered hogs, \$30,584, and slaughtered sheep, \$553. (In later years, bees were added for the production of honey.)

Thus the inmates who could work, even if for only short periods, were performing a valuable service, both for themselves, and for others. Their work in the fields, in the vegetable patches, in the flower gardens and greenhouse, and in institution's shops would have been therapeutic and soul satisfying.



Cook county, for over 100 years, operated a poor farm, with able-bodied paupers doing most of the work. Pictured (top) are an attractive display of vegetables grown on the farm, and (lower) Dunning inmates, including mental patients, working in cabbage field, about 1900.

Oak Forest was their home and they were helping maintain it, even as they had done in their own homes thruout most of a lifetime.

A Decade Of Retrenchment

The depression years of the 1930's were trying times for Oak Forest, as well as for all other operations of county gov-

ernment. Tax monies were hard to come by, no new construction could be undertaken, and it indeed was a task just trying to keep the county's institutional buildings in a condition of fair repair. Retrenchment was the order of the decade.

Meanwhile, Oak Forest's population of inmates continued at a high level. There was continuous overcrowding, and never enough room to admit all who were in need of infirmary care.



Dunning, like its successor, Oak Forest, produced many chickens, shown here (top), with home for mentally ill male workers appearing in background. Lower—meat hogs, at Cook county's Dunning poor farm, feed at trough. Pictures believed taken about 1900.



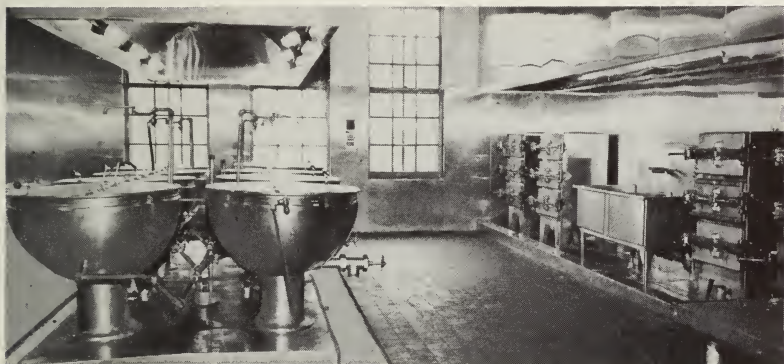
Inmates enjoy friendly little game of stud poker at Oak Forest, about 1911.

A table showing the average daily population at the Oak Forest infirmary and tuberculosis hospital during the worst years of the depression is enlightening. It follows:

Average Daily Populations

Year	Infirmary	Tuberculosis	
		Hospital	Total
1930	3,419	499	3,918
1931	3,555	573	4,128
1932	3,626	548	4,174
1933	3,599	535	4,134
1934	3,509	498	4,007
1935	3,461	459	3,929

What is believed to have been the peak load of all times was reached on Jan. 25, 1932, when the institution was caring for 4,292 inmates.



Top: By standards of time, Oak Forest's kitchen in 1912 was model of perfection. Male helpers wore long-sleeved, white shirts with stiff collars, also vests. (Unless, of course, they had been tipped-off that their "pitchers" would be "tuck.") Female helpers presumably had ankles!

Lower: Portion of 1959 kitchen, showing steam pressure cookers and ovens.

The population of able-bodied inmates dwindled during the late 1930's and the 1940's due to welcomed pensions, other forms of aid, and better chances for obtaining jobs, all of which permitted many of the aged to remain in their own homes, as has been pointed out.

Yet the facilities at Oak Forest remained over-crowded at all times, this particularly because, in the gradual conversion to a geriatrics hospital for the ailing aged, more space, under hospital regulations, was demanded for each bed.

There were valid reasons, however, for a lag in expansion.



Dr. E. J. Chesrow, medical director, visits patients at Oak Forest hospital, 1958.



Pride of Oak Forest hospital are its aged, numbered among whom, in 1959, was Mrs. Charlotte Bonner, age 109 on April 25. Mrs. Bonner remembers that as a child, living within downtown Chicago, she scrambled for pennies tossed by Abraham Lincoln. Above, she is being helped to a piece of her birthday cake by Superintendent Carl K. Schmidt, Jr. Mrs. Bonner died Sept. 8, 1959.

Eldest patient at Oak Forest hospital, Mrs. Sally Powell celebrated 115th birthday anniversary Feb. 10, 1959. Born into slavery, she outlived husband and their seven sons. Admitted to Oak Forest in 1951, she now is bedfast. Proof of age is contained in family Bible. Here hospital officials and nurses present her with birthday cake. Inset, lower left, is another picture of Mrs. Powell.



First, there was the depression, as previously pointed out, and immediately after came the threat of war, then World War II. All building materials were needed for the war effort. Even the obtaining of materials for proper building maintenance was a serious problem.

The period from 1930 until almost 1948 was one that taxed the ingenuity of county officials and the county's maintenance workers. It was a time of patch-as-patch-can to keep the county's several institutions in functional order.

Institutional Improvements Resumed

With the war over and building materials again available, the county set out upon a rehabilitation and improvement program for all of its institutions, including Oak Forest, County hospital, the Arthur J. Audy Home for Children (juvenile home), the Family Court building, the county jail, and even the County building, itself.

Relative to Oak Forest, the county board succeeded in obtaining approval by public referendum of three improvement bond issues totaling \$17,280,000. (The first issue, for \$3,500,000, was approved in 1947; the second, for \$4,000,000, in 1951; and the third, for \$9,580,000, in 1957.)

Much of the rehabilitation and improvement work was started at a time when William N. Erickson, a Republican, was board president (1946 to 1954), but the program had the full support of the ten Democratic commissioners from Chicago, including Daniel Ryan, then finance committee chairman and now president. The Democrats, at the time, constituted a two-thirds majority of the 15-member board. (Erickson, incidentally, has been a board member continuously since 1934. He resides in Evanston.)

Among the post-World War II projects at Oak Forest have been the following:

1. Completed in 1950 the \$950,000 residence for nurses. This six-story brick building contains 150 sleeping rooms.



Figures important in Cook county's history are pictured here. Occasion is Feb. 4, 1957, when county board named a forest preserve area in honor of Commissioner Elizabeth A. Conkey, board member since 1934 and long-time leader in county welfare activities. Congratulating Mrs. Conkey are, left to right, Commissioner Clayton F. Smith, former board president; Commissioner William N. Erickson, also a former board president, and Daniel Ryan, current board president. Wooded tract named after Mrs. Conkey lies along Tinley creek, in Worth township, south of Chicago.

2. Completed in 1953 a new \$850,000 recreation and physical medicine building. In one portion of the building is an assembly hall that seats 600 patients. The hall's balcony is so designed that bed-ridden patients, without having to be removed from their beds, can be brought up to the balcony by use of an especially designed elevator and then propped up so they can see the stage.

The hall is used for the showing of movies twice weekly and for assemblies upon other occasions. Its use relieved congestion in the main dining room where assemblies formerly were held.

On the same floor with the hall are the patients' library and a cafeteria for employes. In the English basement are the rooms which are equipped for hobby workshops and physical therapy. This latter involves work in which patients, including spastics, are retaught control of muscles, the use of which had been lost thru illness.

3. Completed in 1954 was a new receiving and discharge building, costing \$350,000, which facilitated the processing and examining of patients who are entering or leaving the chronic disease hospital. Medical equipment in the examining rooms of this building is the latest known to science.

4. As a supplement and ally to the work in medicine, a hospital solarium that accommodates up to 100 patients was built and opened in 1952. Altho completed first, it was to and does adjoin the new receiving and discharge building. Its cost is included in the \$350,000 total for the combined project.

This elongated, sun-lit building, with its ceiling-high windows that give it the appearance of a botanical conservatory, is very popular with ambulatory and wheel-chair patients. There, even on winter days, the patients can enjoy one-another's company while absorbing the beneficial rays of the sun.

5. The water supply, which at times in the past had run low at the institution, was made adequate in 1953 thru the construction of a new reservoir which holds three million gallons — enough for a four-weeks supply. Its cost was \$300,000.

6. Completed in 1955 was a new laboratory and mortuary building, long needed, at a cost of \$225,000.

7. During the period from 1953 to 1955 the church facilities at Oak Forest underwent extensive remodeling. This included the Catholic and Protestant chapels and the Jewish Synagog. A Christian Science reading room also was added.

8. The old building which formerly housed the nurses was extensively remodeled in 1954 and is used as living quarters for

12 resident doctors and their families.

9. The Tuberculosis hospital underwent extensive remodeling during 1954 and 1955. Included was the addition of a rehabilitation department where patients can learn new vocations, or improve themselves in the crafts they already know.

There both men and women can learn typing and other forms of office work; men can learn trades, such as woodwork and various types of factory work that will help them in earning a living after they are discharged as cured. Women patients can attend sewing and cooking schools. Any patient who would like to improve his English, including those of foreign birth, may attend English classes.

Patients who are unable to leave their beds have occupational therapy work brought to them. These patients do leather



There is nothing like a trip to the hair dresser to perk up a lady, regardless of age. At Oak Forest hospital volunteer beauticians from the outside come to the institution one day a year and give free beauty treatments to patients.

work, knitting, weaving and the like. Those who like to paint are encouraged to do so. The able director of the rehabilitation services in the Tuberculosis hospital is Stanley F. Doenecke.

Also added to the Tuberculosis hospital was a new X-Ray department, a new operating room, new supply department, and two new, enclosed porches for convalescing patients. Wards were remodeled and the six patient cottages (these had been an outgrowth of the original "tent colony" which proved impractical) were remodeled to accommodate an additional 120 tubercular patients.

10. Important but less spectacular work of rehabilitation during this period included the replacing of steps with concrete ramps which make it easier for the crippled and the wheel-chair patients to move about. The institution's electric system also was converted from direct to alternating current.

In 1958, with its newly-acquired bond money, the county set about with further major improvements, including the remodeling of the large wards in the chronic disease unit.

And on the drawing boards shortly before this history went to press were plans, according to President Ryan, for the early construction of a highly functional building which, in some respects, could be termed the "pulse" of the great institution.

The proposed structure will adjoin the receiving building. Its first floor will contain the offices of the chronic disease unit doctors, the second floor will be given over to operating rooms, and on upper floors sufficient space will be created for the addition of from 200 to 300 beds. The plans were being drawn by Richard W. Prendergast, county architect, and his assistant, L. F. Wysockey.

Everyone knows that a potter's field is a burial place for paupers and unknown persons. Cook county's is on the Oak Forest property, not because Oak Forest hospital contributes any great number of dead, for it does not, but because such a burial place must be located somewhere, and the county does

own great acreage at Oak Forest.

Burials, averaging 265 a year, are mostly for unclaimed bodies that police originally had taken to the county morgue. Oak Forest hospital buries not more than one or two in the field each year, nearly all deceased patients being claimed by relatives for decent burial in family plots.

In a gesture of respect for the pauper dead, the county late in 1958, partly at the suggestion of Superintendent Carl K. Schmidt, Jr., created a new 25-acre burial ground, to be known as the Cook County cemetery, next to the old pauper's field.

Beginning with 1960, paupers were to be buried in separate graves, marked with concrete headstones. Heretofore, the wooden boxes containing the bodies were laid end to end in trenches eight feet deep, each marked with a wooden slab bearing a number. The new cemetery will provide for 12,000 graves.

The Farm Had To Go

Discontinuation of all farm operations at Oak Forest, which occurred in February of 1954, came as a surprise to many.

For more than a hundred years¹ Cook county had operated a highly productive farm in conjunction with its poorhouse, a practice generally followed by other counties in other states thruout America.

A dictionary definition of poor farm is: "A farm maintained at public expense for the support and employment of paupers."

At Cook county's poor farm the livestock, principally meat hogs and chickens, and the tons of vegetables that were grown, helped feed not only the inmates but enough surplus often was produced to supply, in part, the needs at County hospital and the county jail.

But time was running out for the county's poor farm. The character of the institution was changing, as noted elsewhere. Its gradual conversion to a geriatrics hospital for the financially

1. In 1851 the county had purchased 160 acres of land near Dunning for poor-house and farming purposes, as explained elsewhere.



Some 60 teen-age volunteers, known as Volunteers, come to Oak Forest hospital on certain nights each week. They wheel patients to balcony of auditorium on "show" nights, help stage "game" nights for patients, and in summer help with patients in the yards. Selected from nearby high schools, the Volunteers here are being honored on stage by Supt. Carl K. Schmidt, Jr.



A picnic under the shade trees on spacious grounds of Oak Forest hospital is enjoyed by patients.

distressed left it with fewer and fewer able-bodied men and women who could help with the farming and canning. By April of 1946 only 150 of the 2,213 infirmary inmates were able to do even light work. (Now, of course, all are medical patients at Oak Forest and are incapable of farm work.)

As this lack of inmate help developed, the county had to hire more and more outside workers to keep up production. In time, there came a point of diminishing returns. Hired laborers worked but eight hours per day, 40 hours per week, and no one could blame them. Yet there was developing the lack of love for the farm that keeps a farmer and his wife and his children toiling for long hours to make their farm a success.

Responsibility for successful management of the farm had become a continuous headache to the members of the county board. True, they could and did relegate management to others, but the responsibility, as in all other county matters, still was theirs.

The late Frank Venecek, superintendent at Oak Forest from 1923 to 1949, had his hands full with the management of the huge institution that fast was becoming a complete hospital. His chief interest necessarily had to be the welfare of the patients, and in that he excelled.

(The writer of this history has walked thru the wards at Oak Forest with Superintendent Venecek and has heard the bed-ridden aged, both men and women, welcome him with such heart-warming expressions as: "God bless you, Mr. Venecek." They would clutch at his clothing and he would stop to say a cheery word that left them smiling. His was a decency to mankind that was life-giving.)

Superintendent Venecek also loved the farm side of his position, but with the farm problems mounting, it became increasingly difficult to keep a tight rein on the situation. The farm foremen under him, competent in their own right, were having difficulty making the farm pay for itself.

County Acquired Negri

At this point we wish to bring into the picture the county's efficiency expert, the late Anton C. Negri, who eventually was to play an important role in the welfare of Oak Forest.

Negri was retained by the county board on Feb. 16, 1937 for a year's work at County hospital at a salary of \$25,000, from which he was to pay for his own staff of four or five assistants.



A trip to the "country store" is fun the world over. Here is the store, prior to remodeling, at Oak Forest hospital. Ambulatory patients come with their pennies to buy such things as greeting cards, "goodies," and, sometimes, a "chaw of terbaccer." For bed-ridden patients, "store" carts are wheeled to bedsides.

His was the job of eliminating wasteful buying of foodstuffs and other hospital supplies, in working out procedures that would eliminate waste of manpower and duplication of effort, in instituting improvements that would contribute to the welfare of hospital patients, and, in general, operating with a free hand in bettering whatever conditions he would find at such a huge institution.

That Negri got the job was largely due to the fact that for the previous one and one-half years he had worked for the

county on a voluntary basis in helping the late John Toman, then sheriff, in improving conditions at the county jail, particularly in the kitchens.

Toman was lavish in his praise of Negri's work, pointing out that because of it, the prisoners were being fed better at much lower costs to the county. Civic organizations backed Negri. And the county board, of which Clayton F. Smith then was president, was eager to obtain Negri's services for County hospital.

(Smith was first elected as president and board member in 1934, served as president the following 12 years, and still is a member, having been re-elected Nov. 4, 1958 for his seventh consecutive four-year term.)

Negri, of course, was well qualified for his work. Swiss born, he had come to America as a youth and had distinguished himself both as a business man and as a business consultant.

He had successfully managed large hotels in both New York City and Chicago, was a specialist in mass buying and mass cooking, knew how to efficiently employ workers, could detect and rectify management errors, and insisted upon the employment of modern, efficient business methods and the use of up-to-date equipment.

Not only had he been able to manage successfully for others, but Negri had built up and become president of his own successful dairy products company in Chicago. He was financially independent and had gone into virtual retirement prior to his employment by the county. But the restless drive within him prompted Negri to want to continue management work, particularly when he saw that public institutions were in need of improvements.

Setting one's self up as an efficiency expert or engineer is to invite having fun poked at you, whether you are J. L. Jacobs (a highly efficient tax and management expert who did meritorious work for the county in the late 1920's and early

1930's), Anton C. Negri, or any other worthy management consultant.

By the very nature of the efficiency expert's title and work, he is a game bird for which there is no closed season. It is high sport for friends and supporters of the poor man to question his judgment, hoping here and there to find a chink in his armor about which they can "rib" him. The expert, of course, can minimize this by retaining a goodly sense of humor.

An efficiency expert, of course, continuously must run into the problem of having workers and even department heads and sub-heads throwing obstacles into his path, hoping to defeat his purpose, tho they may not understand exactly what it is.

Such obstructionists and distrusting persons often are motivated by fear of the unknown. They speculate, generally without reason, that the expert will cause them to lose their jobs. Nor do they want the status quo of their familiar routine disturbed, no matter how awkward or even senseless it may be.

Efficiency experts, however, are there to help people, much the same as are policemen and family doctors. Often they can lighten one's load while at the same time bringing about a more efficient and more economical operation.

"Any person not giving Mr. Negri full cooperation will find himself without a job," declared President Smith.

Onions With Whiskers

Before leaving the county board meeting at which Negri was hired, let us allude to the lighter side. When a commissioner asked Negri to cite an example of what he would do if he were to be retained as efficiency expert for County hospital, Negri said:

"Well, when I visited the hospital the other day, I observed that onions were being purchased in wasteful fashion. They had been bought in such overly large amounts that many were sprouting and even growing roots before they could be used.

I would have them purchased in smaller amounts."

With that, another commissioner, George A. Miller, challenged Negri in friendly banter, saying:

"I can produce you doctors who will testify that green onions are even more healthful than dried onions."

Newspaper reporters, of whom this writer was one, enjoyed the little by-play and cheerfully reported the onion angle. The Chicago Daily Tribune even carried an animated cartoon of an onion, showing it with grinning face, sprouts for ears and hair, and bearing a luxurious growth of chin whiskers.

Negri did not always maintain a ready sense of humor. But on the other hand, he would not grow irritable at such mild jibes. If he caught the purport of their meaning, he just let them pass.

It goes without saying that he received the full support of the board and the public in general, including the newspapers, notwithstanding the occasional fun the latter group poked at him. At the end of the year, it was said that Negri had saved the county \$100,000, nor did anyone challenge the statement.

The board, in fact, was so pleased with his work at County hospital that it retained him for another year, adding to his duties the same type of work at Oak Forest Institutions, as Oak Forest hospital then was called.

No job was too big for Negri to tackle. He and his staff pitched into the Oak Forest situation with glee. They observed, made reports of 10,000 words or longer, and instituted hundreds of changes, both major and minor. The amount they saved the taxpayers thru efficient management at both Oak Forest and County hospital in 1938 was estimated at upwards of \$200,000.

Soon thereafter the board named Negri to a post created expressly for him—that of coordinator of all county institutions. This embraced County hospital, Oak Forest Institutions, the juvenile home, Family Court, and county jail. His good

work continued unabated.

Negri strongly and repeatedly criticized the operations of the Oak Forest farm. An owner of farms, himself (there were many facets to the almost incredible Negri's life), he found fault with methods, men and machinery.

We remember once, during the early years of World War II, how Negri came to a county board meeting, loaded down with copies of a voluminous, type-written report on conditions at Oak Forest. The report was a most forbidding maze of figures and assorted statistics, possibly 20,000 words long, with no summarizations.

"Mr. Negri, could you kindly point out a few highlights in this lengthy report?" we asked upon receiving one of the extra copies he had brought along for the press.

"Oh, Mr. Smith," he said with a smile, "this is so good that you must read every word of it."

The fact that he always called us "Smith" never bothered this writer. Originally we had tried to set him straight, but after a few years gave up. (Let us add that being called Smith was no affront to our dignity. In fact the Good Lord has seen fit to create even more Smiths than He has Ryans, Ericksons, Chaplins, Bobrytzkes, Duffies or Johnsons, to name only a few.)

But we were slightly aggravated for another reason. Busy newspapermen, covering a beat where a half-dozen stories may be breaking at once, often have but minutes, not hours, in which to digest lengthy reports. In such cases, reporters appreciate helpful guidance, else anything short of a Wickersham or Kinsey report is likely to find its way into the waste basket.

Finding no summarizations at either the beginning or end of the Negri report, we began in the middle, thumbing pages both ways at once, a confusion not unlike that of Stephen Leacock's armored knight who "flung himself upon his horse and rode madly off in all directions."

Our slight pique had not worn itself out an hour or so later when we phoned Superintendent Venecek to recount that Negri, in his report to the board, had declared that instead of the farm's having 697 hogs and pigs, as Venecek claimed, it had but 694; also that under the Venecek management, the weeds in the beet field had grown taller than the beets.

That did it. The likable, gentle-natured Frank Venecek,



Oak Forest hospital patients are remembered at Christmas with gifts donated by various organizations.

long-time superintendent at Oak Forest, "blew his stack."

"I'll answer that," spumed Venecek. "In the first place, Mr. Negri—you say he is an efficiency expert?—doesn't even know how to count. Maybe three little pigs were hiding behind some old sow when he was looking—if he did look.

"And in the second place, Mr. Negri wouldn't know a beet from a ragweed. Furthermore, you may quote me to this effect."

That we did, in the Chicago Sun (now Sun-Times), under

the heading: "Efficiency Drops In On The Farm."

We never knew which man was correct, nor did it matter too much—their differences were minor, rather than major, and both men were able. But we did have fun.

Meanwhile, the board squirmed. Things were not going smoothly "down on the farm."

That might have been a logical time for the commissioners, with no help available from Oak Forest inmates because only invalids now were being admitted, to close shop and do away with the century-old farm system.

Victory Gardens In Vogue

But the board could not let go at the time. With the war on, the emphasis was upon "victory" gardens. Everybody, from a city home owner, with his eight by ten foot garden, to the biggest farmer in America, was producing foodstuffs not only for home consumption, but also for much of the outside world. Thus it was that the board had to hire outside workers to continue farm operations at a time when competent labor was scarce.

It was not until February of 1954 that farm operations were discontinued. When that occurred, however, the board not only ordered all of the old farm buildings torn down, but went "whole-hog" by ordering the demolition of even the comparatively new hog barn and slaughter house. (The latter buildings had been erected at Negri's recommendation after Negri had added the farm's management to his many duties.) The board then rented out the tillable acres to nearby farmers.

The elimination of all farm activities came as a disappointment to Negri, and he said as much to this writer. Altho he had roundly criticized farm operations for many years, one of his ambitions, as it developed, was to manage the farm himself, and he was looking forward to it with pleasure. But if the farm picture was as bad as Negri had painted it, the board

members reasoned, not even Negri, himself, could make it a paying proposition.

"Let's face it," Commissioner John J. Duffy was heard to remark upon one occasion. "We not only are not farmers, but why should we be in competition with those who are?"

Let us here explain that Venecek, after 25 years as superintendent at Oak Forest, had retired on March 1, 1949, and was succeeded by Clinton F. Smith, former superintendent of City hospital, St. Louis. (Venecek died Dec. 2, 1957.)

Negri, meanwhile, had continued as coordinator of all county institutions, the post he had held since it had been created for him in 1939. Then, on May 26, 1952, after it was learned that Superintendent Smith was resigning his post to go elsewhere, Negri was named temporary superintendent at Oak Forest.

As such, Negri had full charge until the appointment of Carl K. Schmidt, Jr., as superintendent at Oak Forest on Nov. 1, 1953. But even after that, Negri continued to work for several months with Schmidt until the latter became fully acquainted with his new duties. After that, Negri returned to his status of full-time institutional coordinator, which meant, in effect, that all of the county's charitable institutions were pulling together, with no overlapping, that supplies for the institutions were being purchased to the county's best advantage, that employes were performing their proper work, and that the taxpayer was getting the most from his precious tax dollar.

He Coordinates

During the county board meeting at which Schmidt was appointed superintendent at Oak Forest, George F. Nixon, an astute commissioner, asked some questions he said were pertinent.

"Now if we appoint you superintendent, Mr. Schmidt, where does that leave Mr. Negri?"



Physical therapy is important at Oak Forest hospital. Patients (top) in leather work department; patients (bottom) in shoe repair shop.

Other commissioners quickly responded that Negri would continue as coordinator of all county institutions.

With that, Commissioner Nixon, who was noted for his dry humor, which sometimes bordered on withering sarcasm, turned to Negri and asked:

"Mr. Negri, will you please tell us just what it is that you do for Cook county?" As tho Nixon did not know!

But without waiting for Negri's answer, Nixon lifted an eyebrow and impaled his victim, as would Groucho Marx, in the following fashion:

"Say, for instance, Mr. Negri, that you turn up at County hospital the first thing in the morning. I suppose that while there you 'coordinate'?"

(Nixon's inflection made it sound as tho the word, coordinate, either was something horribly evil, or else something entirely superfluous, for which the taxpayers were burdened.)

"And after you get done 'coordinating' at County hospital," he continued, "you drive out to Oak Forest where you again 'coordinate'? Is that right?"

"That's right," responded the tortured Negri.

"I see," intoned Nixon, dropping the subject with a pitying look.

Sitting on the sidelines, County Auditor Lee J. Howard shook his head, turned to this writer, and whispered:

"That Nixon—he's a card."

Nixon was not against Negri. He was just having fun at the expense of an efficiency expert on whom it was still open season.

Negri died Feb. 4, 1955 at his home at 2327 N. Cleveland ave., Chicago. He was 66 years old.

We have praised Negri, and we have mentioned the fun that occasionally was poked at him. Quite possibly the fun-poking was brought on partly by his lack of an overwhelming sense of humor. Tho he was a pleasant, smiling man, at times he appeared a bit scared in the presence of his employers. •

We have tried to paint an objective picture of Negri. That we have given so much space to this man is because we believe his impact upon Cook county deserves it.

On the afternoon of Sept. 21, 1958, a ceremony observing the 50th anniversary of the beginning of construction at Oak Forest was held underneath the oak trees on the spacious lawn at the sprawling institution.

On this occasion, President Daniel Ryan traced briefly the high-lights of the great institution's history, pointing to the change-over from a poor farm to a hospital for the aged.

(As a very young man, Ryan had first been elected to the board in 1923 to fill out the unexpired term of his father, Daniel, Sr., who had died while in office. The father, likewise, had been board president at one time.)

Commissioner William N. Erickson, who had been a commissioner since 1934 and president from 1946 to 1954, added to the Oak Forest story. The famed Dr. Karl A. Meyer, medical superintendent of all county institutions, who had begun his internship at County hospital in 1908, the same year in which Oak Forest was started, also spoke. So did Superintendent Schmidt. But it remained for Dr. Eugene Chesrow, medical superintendent at Oak Forest since Dec. 1, 1939, to mention, in particular, the work of Negri.

"In the gradual conversion from a poorhouse to a hospital," Dr. Chesrow said, "let us not forget the work of the late Anton C. Negri. Aside from the present and past presidents and members of the county board, who have had the power of appointment, no single person has done more for Oak Forest than Negri.

"A remarkable man, he made it possible for those of us on the medical staff to carry out our ideas. He worked every day, often starting at 6:30 a. m., until one short month before his death. The public owes Negri its undying gratitude for what he did for Cook county."

When this was said of Negri, President Ryan and the other previous speakers declared, almost in unison, "That's right."

President Ryan's speech, delivered at this 50th anniversary ceremony, briefly summarizes what has been said in this chapter on Oak Forest. Because of that it possibly is worth quoting in full. The speech follows:



County Board President Daniel Ryan presents typewriter to Miss Joan Watkins, double amputee patient at Oak Forest hospital. Looking on are, left to right, Carl K. Schmidt, Jr., superintendent; John M. Szymanski, assistant superintendent, and Dr. E. J. Chesrow, medical director.

President Ryan's Remarks

Ladies and gentlemen, distinguished visitors, fellow county commissioners and friends, including those of you who are patients.

We welcome you to this relatively simple, yet significant ceremony in which we are observing the 50th anniversary of the founding of our great Cook county institution, the Oak Forest hospital.

We would have been remiss to have let this half-century mark slip by without observation.

Since the announcement of our proposed ceremonies a few days ago, many congratulatory letters have been received at my office, each praising the present and past county boards and the hospital employes and supervisors for the development of Oak Forest.

Such letters have been received from —

Dr. Roland R. Cross, director of public health for the state of Illinois.

Miss Loula Dunn, director of the American Public Welfare Association.

Howard F. Cook, executive director of the Chicago Hospital Council.

David M. Kinzer, executive director, Illinois Hospital Association.

Henry F. Tenney, noted attorney and former chairman of the Illinois Public Aid Commission.

Samuel A. Goldsmith, executive vice president of the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago.

Dr. Edwin L. Crosby, director, American Hospital Association.

Peter W. Cahill, executive secretary, Illinois Public Aid Commission.

For these felicitations, we say "thank you," yet we all know that the real credit is due the general public for its constant financial and moral support of this great humanitarian undertaking.

We are here today to say good-by, in effect, to a past era, one in which the county cared directly for its able-bodied

indigents, many of whom asked only that they be permitted to help in the production of farm produce with which to help feed themselves.

But now conditions have changed, principally for two reasons. In the first place, various federal, state and local pension aids have made it possible for deserving men and women to continue living happily in their own home surroundings.

In the second place, our own, over-crowded Cook County hospital has been able to transfer many chronically-ill, aged persons to Oak Forest. Our patients here today are brought in with our basic belief that they, given proper medical treatment, love and attention, can be returned to their useful place in society. Many of the patients here now are paying for their keep, tho the cost is relatively low.

Our Oak Forest hospital not only is a refuge for many who eventually will return to their own homes, but it also is a study laboratory for all America. Because of its largeness, great research institutions are observing its work. We here are learning how to lengthen the life-span of man.

Going back a step, let us tell you something about the past history of Oak Forest, the same as I stated in a recent press release.

Most of this institution's 337 acres were purchased by the county board on Jan. 27, 1908, but the improvements were not started until late that year.

County records show that the first contract for Oak Forest improvements was let by the county board on Sept. 21, 1908, fifty years ago today. That contract was for the construction of the water works, consisting principally of a well and a few pipes that were to lead to proposed buildings.

During the next two years, the major portion of the institution's original buildings were completed. These consisted of 19 infirmary buildings and a few livestock barns and granaries.

The institution was opened the first week in December, 1910, when 1731 inmates were transferred to it from the previous county poor farm at Dunning, northwest of Chicago. (Dunning now is operated as a state hospital for the mentally ill.)

A large portion of the inmates of that time, as I have pointed out, were able to work on the farm.

The population peak of 4,292 inmates was reached in January of 1932, during the depth of the depression.

From that point on, however, the nature of the institution began to change. With our Cook County hospital greatly overcrowded, we on the county board directed that more and more of our chronic disease patients be transferred to Oak Forest.

By 1954 so many of our Oak Forest inmates were hospital cases that we no longer could depend upon any of them for help on the farm, so that year we discontinued farm operations, even removing the old farm buildings.

In 1956 the state department of public health licensed the entire institution to operate as two hospitals—one for the care of the chronically ill, and the other for the care of the tubercular.

Operated as a hospital, more bed space is required than was necessary when most of the inmates were able-bodied. That is why, even with some 60 buildings here now, we can accommodate only about 2,300 in the chronic disease unit, and 450 in the tubercular unit.

We members of the county board are increasing the amount of bed space wherever possible, and soon shall add a four-story wing to the receiving department, creating space for another 300 beds.

From here on, for the next half-century and more, we and our successors shall continue to work for the improvement of Oak Forest. In our endeavors we humbly solicit the continued cooperation and support of the public and its organized representatives. All of this, with God's help. Thank you.

At the conclusion of the speech, Dr. Karl A. Meyer said: "President Ryan's was the most factual presentation I ever have heard."

* * *

That was to have concluded our Volume I of Cook county's history, but in 1959 there occurred another event well worth

mentioning. That year Chicago's Junior Association of Commerce and Industry bestowed upon Supt. Carl K. Schmidt, Jr. its annual "good government award" for his outstanding work in helping the county board to make Oak Forest hospital "one of the finest institutions in the world for the care of the chronically ill."

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